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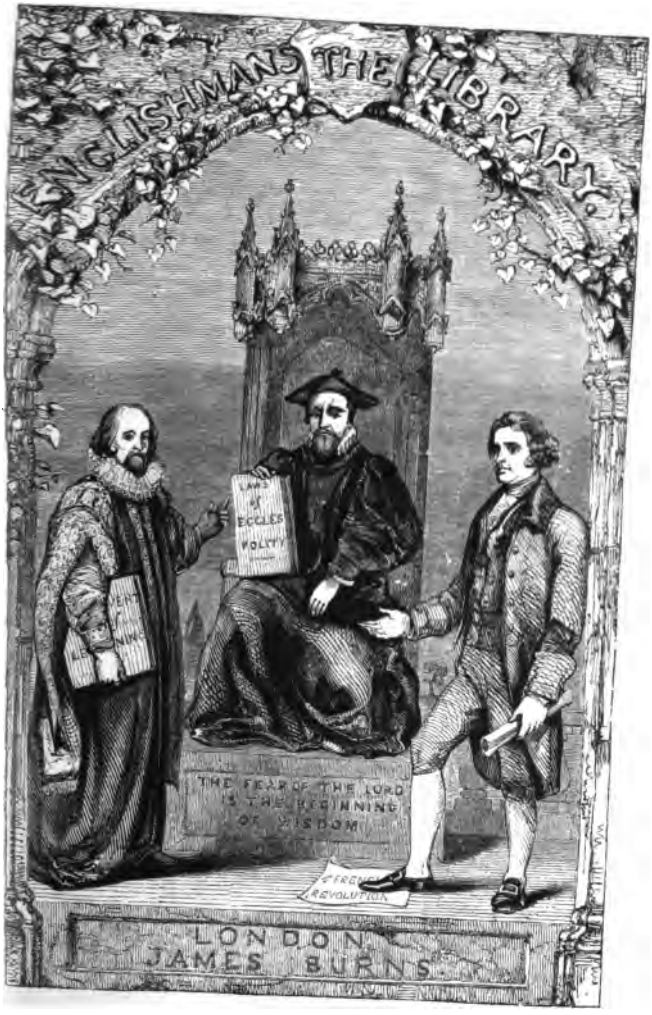
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THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM
LONDON
JAMES BURNS

CHRISTIAN MORALS.

BY THE

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PREFACE.

CANNOT permit this little book to be put forth, without acknowledging, what is no excuse to the writer, but may be a warning to the readers, that from the pressure of unforeseen circumstances, it has been necessary both to write and publish it hastily. It was commenced with a wish to make it popular, like the other volumes of this series: but popular Ethics are already provided for us in our Catechisms and Bibles; and it was soon found impossible to treat the subject scientifically, without entering into abstruse questions. It is therefore designed principally for students, who may be capable of deeper researches than mere questions of common casuistry.

My object has been mainly to restore the connexion so long dissevered between the science of Ethics and the Catholic Christianity of the Church; and to touch chiefly on those questions, which are most prominently discussed in the present day. Perhaps it may not be useless to state in a tabular form, as an outline of

the contents, the chief principles which are suggested.

1. That Ethics are the science of education.

2. That books and writing, without oral instructors, are a very imperfect mode of teaching.

3. That external historical testimony of God's revealed will is the only true basis of moral science.

4. That the Catholic Church only has the right or the power to educate.

5. That the science of Ethics and Christianity are necessarily connected, and yet must be kept distinct.

6. That certain rules are to be observed in the study of Ethics, so as to avoid three great errors in the present day, namely, Rationalism, Syncretism, and Eclecticism.

7. That in education forms are of the greatest importance.

8. That the Sacraments of the Church, especially the Sacrament of Baptism, cannot be separated from ethical education.

9. That there is in the world a real personal Evil agent, to be overcome by those who would be good.

10. That all goodness and virtue consists in

obedience to external law; and the goodness of the Christian in obedience to the law of Christ.

11. That it is a struggle against temptation.

12. That the struggle of a baptised Christian is different from that of a heathen. The one must strive to retain a blessing already given; the other to obtain what is as yet withheld.

13. That our real goodness is the Spirit of God, communicated to us at Baptism.

14. That the quality to which we give the name of good, is that which produces unity in plurality.

15. That the proof of our possessing this good, is our power of resisting our own inclination.

16. That our duties depend on our relations to persons, and ultimately on our relations to God.

17. That this relation is a Covenant.

18. That we are dealt with as free agents.

19. That the knowledge of God contained in a creed is the first foundation of all goodness.

20. That the will of God is our only law.

21. That the confirmation and preservation of the privileges conveyed to us at Baptism is to be the great object of our lives.

22. And that happiness is not pleasure, but something prior and superior to pleasure.

It is unnecessary to specify many other ethical questions which occur incidentally.

I would pray to Almighty God, that he would be pleased in his mercy, not to be offended at such an offering in behalf of his truth and his Church, from a most unworthy minister of it. And next to this, it is my humble desire that it may be received by the University of Oxford, as a grateful though mean acknowledgment of inestimable benefits derived from her sound discipline, her wise teaching, and her blessed institutions; which may it please God even now to preserve among us, as a light in a darkened age, and a safeguard to his Church in this land, and throughout the earth.

CHRISTIAN MORALS.

Address to a Young Reader.

IF you had lived fifteen hundred years ago, though what I am about to say to you would have been taught you from a child, it would probably not have come to you in the shape of a little book. There was a time when Christian men did not trust to books to inculcate Christian truths. And why this was, you may understand, if you consider how you will deal with me, who now wish to talk to you in the person of a little book. You have taken me up, have you not, in order to amuse yourself? You have seated yourself in a chair—made yourself very comfortable—propose, if you like me, to read me, just as long as is convenient and pleasant; and to throw me aside when you are tired. Whenever I become grave and uninteresting, you will cease to listen. You will skip this passage and that; turn over three or four pages, till your eye catches capital letters, which seem to indicate a story; exclaim against me when I am dull; pronounce me wrong, if I say what you do not agree with; call me dark and obscure, if you fail to understand me at first sight; criticise and judge me, in all things, instead of docilely submitting to be guided by me and overruled. And if I happen to coincide with yourself, you will go away flattered

and confirmed in your opinion of your own wisdom. And, in the meantime, I am powerless in your hands. I cannot rebuke you for your levity; nor rouse you to attention; nor explain my own meaning, when you mistake it; nor chastise you for indolence and carelessness; nor reduce you to humility, by shewing your own ignorance; nor compel you to study me; nor encourage you to think afterwards on what I say; nor save you from perverting my words to your own injury; nor abide with you in your hands, ready to admonish you at all times; nor make you feel shame, or gratitude, or affection to me, by which you would act up to my lessons. And the words which I utter are all ambiguous—all of them may be made by any ingenious reader to take one meaning or another, according to his own disposition. What I say in the beginning will require to be balanced and qualified by something that occurs at the end—sentence with sentence, rule with rule, principle with principle. But whether you do this or not, will depend on your own industry, and honesty, and knowledge, and talent. If you fail in any one of these—if you are either lazy, or partial, or ignorant, or stupid (and what young man is not liable to one or more of these faults?), you will certainly err. If you act upon your error, you will fall into mischief. If, what is not less likely, you do not act at all, but forget what you read the moment it has passed from your eye, and make it all a dream, then you will fall into a still worse evil; for you will have lost an opportunity of doing right, and have made your conscience more insensible to warnings, and learnt to practise contempt for your teachers, and to look on questions of right and wrong, virtue and vice, as things to be talked of and argued about, not for practice and self-denial; and your condemnation will be more certain, and your punishment more

severe, because the knowledge will have been placed before your eyes, and you will have failed to profit by it.

These are some of the reasons, and there are many others, why wise men of old—wiser men than you or any of us in the nineteenth century—would have opened their eyes with as much contempt as holy men can feel towards ignorant fellow-creatures, if any one had proposed to make you a good Christian, or a good citizen, by means of a book.

And yet I suspect you will say, they certainly would have wished—would they not?—to make me both wise and good. At least, the better that men are around me, the more anxious they seem to be that others should be good likewise. And if books were of no use, what could they have had?

Now here is an instance of the evil which I mentioned above. You have, I suspect, mistaken my meaning. You are on the point either of throwing me down in ridicule; or at least you will declare to your father or mother, or some one who asks you what you have been reading, that I have been gravely telling you that books are of no use to make men good. Now, if you will look back, you will find that I said no such thing. I said that wise men in former days would not have thought to make you good by means of a book; but I did not say that books were not useful to make men good. When you have to take medicine, the medicine must be brought in a glass. When you mount your horse, you will look out for the bridle. And the glass is very useful in curing you, and the bridle in enabling you to ride; and yet I think it is not the glass which cures you, nor the bridle which makes the horse go. And so books may be of great service in making you good, and all the time not be the thing which makes you good at all. This is a problem,

is it not? And now, if you are clever and active-minded, you will put me down for a little time, and think how this can be. If you are indolent, and good for little, you will pass on, and think it no matter whether you understand it or not. And if you possess a faculty not very common, but very characteristic of superior minds, you will say to yourself, "Now here is a seeming contradiction, a sort of mystery, which I cannot explain, and which yet is gravely asserted by a printed book, which is probably written and printed by a person wiser than myself; and, as far as I can see, I cannot contradict it. Probably, therefore, it is true; and probably also there may be many more problems or mysteries of the same kind, which may also be true in their way, though I cannot understand them either." Now, if you will do this, lay down the book, take a turn about the room, and try to recollect and comprehend what I have said, by finding out other instances, where things are useful in accomplishing ends, which nevertheless they do not accomplish at all,—you will have taken perhaps the first step to becoming a wise and energetic man; and I will tell you afterwards what, fifteen hundred years ago, great and good men would have done to make you great and good as themselves.

CHAPTER II.

THE first thing, then, which great and good men, many ages back, would have done to make you like themselves, would have been this: they would have gone, when you were an infant, to your cradle, or even before you were strong enough to lie in a cradle, while your eyes were scarcely open, and your little tiny fingers were moving faintly about, as if to find out where you were, and, hour after hour, you were sleeping without sense on your mother's breast, or wearying her with little cries, which neither you could explain, nor she understand — these great and good men, I say, would have come to find you, and would have bade your mother and your father bring you, as a foul, polluted, accursed thing, against which God was wroth, and over which the spirits of evil were permitted to have dominion, to a place which they would appoint. And your parents would undoubtedly have obeyed. With all their love and pity for you, though they might willingly have died to do you good, they would still have confessed that you were thus polluted, and accursed, and a prey to evil spirits, and that by themselves they were powerless to rescue you from this state of misery and shame. Now is not this a mystery, a strange thing, which you cannot understand? You did not make yourself— you had no choice in your parents, no power to do a single act; you lay there feeble, ignorant, half blind, half deaf, at the mercy of others; never having heard of God, never having disobeyed his voice, unstained by any offence to man, and the

object of tenderest love and compassion to all about you. Your mother would hang over you hour by hour, her eyes filled with tears at the joy now following her great anguish; clasping you to her breast as her precious treasure; thinking nothing of cold, or pain, or watching, or hunger, while you could be satisfied. Your father would leave his work or his business to come and watch over your cradle. Your little brothers would gather round to look at you while you were sleeping, and disturb you by trying to kiss you, that they might shew their affection. Neighbours, and even strangers, would interest themselves about you, visit you, talk of you, and, if death had come upon you then, would have mourned for you. And if you were the first-born—born to great riches or rank—your entrance into the world would be announced to it as an event in which many hearts were called on to rejoice. The rich would be invited to congratulate —the poor would be fed—the house gladdened—every thing would be full of exultation, and gratitude, and hope, because you were born into the world—you, who all the time were lying in helpless ignorance, not merely helpless and ignorant, but, as wise and holy men would declare, under the wrath and curse of God! Would not this be a mysterious tale to tell a stranger?

Now I do not ask you yet to consider if there are not more mysteries of this same kind—more cases within your own experience, where men, and boys, and children, may be objects of aversion and anger to others, without being aware of it themselves, or having done any thing to deserve it by their own will and deed—more cases where common people may be rejoicing in hope and triumph over beings who ought really to be pitied. When you become older, you will learn that to look first to your own

experience, to your own understanding, or to your own notions of right and wrong, is not the wisest or safest way of solving mysteries. Let us rather think, who are these persons, who would have come, as I described, to your cradle, given this account of your condition, and bade your father and mother do as they commanded, to save you from it. Are they persons whom you ought to trust—whom it would be great presumption and mere folly for you to despise?

In the first place, who are you, that you should despise any one? You are not wise, otherwise you would not require instruction; nor strong, for you cannot preserve your life without assistance; nor experienced, for the world is immeasurable, and time infinite, and of these you see but a part—and think how small a part! All that you are quite sure of is the present moment; just as if you were imprisoned in a dungeon, and only one little eylet-hole could be discovered in the roof, over which some hand without were drawing a long infinite series of objects, and only one to be seen at a time. Of the future you know nothing; it is all dark. You walk on; but beyond the ground on which you fix your foot, you cannot see a step. You guess, hope, fear, imagine, anticipate; and very often hopes, and fears, and anticipations come true; but they are but guesses after all, and guesses are not knowledge. And so, too, of the past. Upwards of five thousand years have passed since man was created. Millions of men have been scattered over the face of the earth, have seen sights, and done deeds, and collected observations, of which how little do you know! How far have you journeyed from your own home? What countries and nations have you seen? What have you read from those innumerable volumes in which the learning of men lies

buried as in a catacomb? And if you thus know nothing of the earth, how much less have you seen of heaven—of those illimitable regions, sown with myriads of stars, each star a world—each leading the eye beyond it into immeasurable depths of space—each subject to laws, performing works, obeying the will of its Creator; but whose laws, and works, and obedient movements, no human eye has yet done more than guess at?

I say, then, that you are not in a capacity to despise any one—to deny any fact which you may receive from the testimony of others, unless it is refuted by other and superior testimony. You cannot say what may, or may not, be. All that you know beyond the thought of the moment, you must take upon trust from others. You must live upon their contributions; trade with their capital; build on their foundations; follow in their footsteps;—or you must perish. In one word, your whole existence depends on the belief of testimony.

Now, as all that I—this little book, which you hold in your hand—intend to say to you, is built on this fact, lay me down for a moment, and consider if it is not so. And I will just suggest to you some simple obvious heads, under which to make the trial.

First, then, consider what takes place whenever you eat or drink; and eat and drink you must often, or you will certainly die. Now what do you know of your food? You have never seen it prepared; you see little of its contents, still less of its effect upon your frame. You take it on the testimony of those who serve it up to you—of the servant, the cook, the baker, the confectioner, the butcher, the grocer, the vintner, of every one who has been engaged in preparing it, or any part of it; and each of whom had it in his power to insert poison, or to

omit something which renders it nutritious. And yet you believe what they tell you, without asking; and if you refuse to believe them, you cannot eat at all. And what is to become of you?

You talk with your companion, with your master, your parent, your servant. Now all that you hear are certain sounds issuing from his mouth, and you see certain movements of the face; and from these two together you conjecture what is passing in his mind—in that mind which you never saw, and never can see in this life; but without knowing the movement of which, you may as well live with an automaton or a stone statue. And we all know how easy it is to feign words and dress up the countenance; and every one about you, who speaks to you, may have a real interest in deceiving you. Some of them may have great powers of deceit, and take delight in it. Not one in a thousand either could, or would unveil to you the whole state of his heart and mind. And yet if you distrust them, if you will not believe that they speak truth, how will you live with them? You cannot converse with them, nor be instructed by them, nor learn their character, nor love, nor please, nor guard against, nor influence them, nor establish any communication whatever with them, unless you take their testimony to what is passing within them. And without such communication daily and hourly, I ask again what is to become of you?

Take another instance. How much of your life must depend on acting upon general rules! that is, on a knowledge, not only of individual facts, as that, on taking this drug, death has followed—on following this path, a man has fallen into a pit,—but rather of the universal principles wrought out by experiment and induction, that such drugs always will produce death, that such and such paths always

do terminate in pitfalls. Every action in life, which proceeds from the higher exercise of reason, must start with general principles of this kind. But where are you to get them, if testimony is not to be admitted? How many are deduced from experiment, which have been, and will be again, fatal to the experimenters! how many from observations within the reach of a few only! how many from facts, which are past, and may never return again! Will you throw them aside—commence forming a new stock for yourself—hazard every thing in the act of forming them—and, after all, receive them upon human testimony, the testimony of your own senses, instead of the combined senses of many others?

These are but a few of the cases in which testimony is all in all. Of the past, of the distant, of every thing beyond the range of your own eye and ear—even then, of the certainty and correctness of your own perception,—of all universal truths, of all more recondite experiences, which have not happened to fall within your own narrow field of inquiry, of the heart and mind of man, and of all that passes within it; in other words, of all that is invisible (and how much of our existence, even in this world of sense, depends on things invisible!); of all this, without testimony, you can know nothing.

And therefore I say to you, that when good and wise men—when any men come forward, and assert any thing, however strange and mysterious, the first thought should be, not to reject the testimony, because the fact is strange, but to incline to admit the fact, because testimony is the natural channel for conveying such strange knowledge to man.

What, then, you will ask, am I to be credulous, superstitious, a listener to old wives' fables? Am I to have no discernment, no judgment of my own?

I answer, that you ought to be credulous—a listener to every thing—to exercise no judgment of your own in opposition to accredited testimony. Do not begin with doubting, but begin with believing. Belief is natural, doubt is not; belief is a virtue, doubt is a sin. Why is it you fear to believe? because some evil may follow? Consider, for a moment, even in the worst instances, if believing the word of others is thus dangerous. Grant that we should put trust in every thing, what evil would follow? Of all that range of knowledge which is merely speculative, and involves no practical risk —as of geography, history, natural science, geometry, astronomy,—it is little man's interest to deceive; his discoveries are nothing, unless supported by learning and reasoning; they are open to correction at each point, and must be corrected step by step, exactly in proportion as they are brought into action. You read Bruce's Travels. They sound strange; but what harm arises from believing them to be true, even though indeed they were false? And what good proceeds from doubting? For it is better to have the mind filled with innocent fairy tales, and visions of the fancy, than to keep it empty, and cold, and lonely, without an occupant.

And as for facts which lead to action, how rarely are men interested in deceiving you! A robber may wish to entrap you to a solitary spot by some false tale; a beggar may delude you by a fiction of distress. But these cases are not the ordinary dealings of men, and carry with them their own safeguard. For the most part, men are more disposed to warn you against evil by their testimony, than to delude you into it. They are alarmists; they like to exaggerate; they are fond of exciting wonder, and sympathy, and emotion; of spreading terror, of exercising power in deterring

you from action, of leading you away with themselves from possible mischief, rather than of drawing you on to share in a doubtful good. And when they do attempt to deceive, how hard they find it not to betray themselves by inconsistencies!

Now these are provisions of nature; or rather, never say, nature, but of Almighty God, the Lord and Master of nature; these are his provisions for guarding you from hurt, when you obey his will, and put your trust in the words of men. But he has made a still better provision. He takes care that, from your earliest childhood, you should have standing by your side his own *appointed* witnesses—witnesses of truth and good; not indeed infallible, but least of human beings likely to err or to mislead you; so that your ears may be preoccupied by them, and every suggestion of evil, however mighty the testimony to it, may be met by a previous testimony still mightier against it. God has given you Parents, whose interest, as well as duty, is to secure you from harm—whose authority is founded on a commission from Him, by whose law man does not spring out of the earth, but is moulded at the breast of his mother—whose knowledge is rarely their own invention, but the common treasure of approved human wisdom. He has given you, moreover, Society,—Society, with its governors and laws; its governors, like parents, commissioned from heaven; its laws having their root in the revealed will of God; and both, even from the instinct of self-preservation, compelled to wish that you should do what is good, and obtain what will make you happy. At any rate, they are both of them ministers and representatives of God. They are not formed by man. They derive their power by delegation from heaven; and as such, they claim your obedience. If they speak what God has put into their mouths,

you cannot err in following them; if they speak for their own profit, yet obey them, as set over you by God, until you have from God some positive command to the contrary brought to you by ministers more formally accredited, with superior powers; and *he will bear you safe from harm.* For this is the real question for your consideration: Are these witnesses whose voice I am called on to obey sent by another, or do they come of themselves? Are they appointed, instituted, regularly commissioned to deliver a message from God, or are they self-taught, and mere human agents? Ask this of your parents; ask it of your king and civil governors; ask it, above all, of those who come to you with especial warnings and spiritual communications. Did you appoint them? Did they appoint themselves? Do they date their authority from man? If so, you must follow them at your own risk. In obedience there is no virtue, for you are not obeying God. There is even sin, for you cannot follow two masters; and in following those whom God has not sent, you must be deserting those whom He has sent. And if they lead you by accident in the way which He would choose, there is no reward; for you are not thinking of God, but of man: and if, as they are sure to do, they lead you from the path into evil, there is no excuse; for the evil has been of your own choosing.

Let me give you, then, in conclusion, for the present, these few short maxims:—

1. In all things act by testimony.

2. In all things take that testimony which is appointed for you by God; which is given to you by persons set over you by His hand.

3. Never depart from this, unless you have the clearest and most indisputable dispensation, con-

veyed to you by an authority also set over you by God, but appointed as superior to them.

Or, in still fewer words,

Believe in and obey your parents. Believe in and obey your king; and never dispute their voice, except you are commanded by—whom?

I will tell you this in another chapter.

CHAPTER III.

It is not unlikely that you think I am wandering from the subject. I began by saying, that in former times good men would have little thought of making you good by means of a book—a book on ethics; and I was about to tell you how they would have attempted to make you good, when the very first part of their proposal seemed to involve a strange mystery which startled us; and I was obliged to go over a part, but only a part, of the many considerations which might fairly induce a man to listen to them submissively, and to put confidence in their words. For the men, of whom I spoke as coming to your cradle, if you had been born 1500 years ago, are not mere imaginary persons, who lived, and died, and passed away from the earth, leaving nothing but their names and their ashes behind them. They are persons with whom, even at this distance of time, you, who perhaps never heard before of them, or saw them, have a very close connexion. They were no relations to your family, yet are very near relations of yourself. They had no money, and never knew that such a being as you would be born; and yet they laboured to preserve, and succeeded in transmitting *for you*, a greater inheritance than any earthly monarch ever accumulated for his son. Many more strange facts might be stated of them; not the least, that it is *their testimony* to which, in the present day, we must look back through the long mist of years, whenever we want to know what is good and evil—what will make us

happy—how we should try to become, what we all wish to become, perfect instead of imperfect, strong instead of weak, pure instead of impure, wise instead of fools.

These men are also the persons to whom you must look, by whose testimony you must abide, if ever your parent or your king, the appointed messengers of God, seem to betray their trust, and speak words which you ought not to obey.

Now all this is liable to much misinterpretation; and there are not a few persons in the world who would put on, when they read it, a very grave face, and use very hard words, as if a little book containing such notions could only lead you into mischief. But let us consider together how the case really stands; and when any person of any kind comes to you seriously with any statement whatever, never turn away in contempt without examining it, unless it be *contradictory*, positively contradictory, to something which you have been told before, and by better testimony. If it be not contradictory, it may be something which may be true, and which you may hold together with what you know already; and then, in rejecting it, you would lose an opportunity of gaining an accession to your knowledge, and of possessing two facts or principles instead of only one.

Now look round first in the place where you are living. Besides your parents, who are constantly telling you what to do and what not to do—and besides certain magistrates and civil officers, who, if you disobeyed the laws of the land, would proceed to punish you, and who, therefore, stand to you as witnesses of good and evil—besides these, who both have been placed over you by God, parents through the arrangements of nature, magistrates through the appointment of that supreme power in the state, the King, who is ordained of God—besides these, there

are certain other persons,—I should fear there would be more than *one*,—who call themselves ministers of God. They profess that God has sent them with an especial message in their hands—a message (they would say) not invented by themselves—containing promises and threatenings, which, as men, they can have no power to enforce; and advice, which, if it comes from them as men, is little better to be regarded than the words of any ordinary fellow-mortal. All this message, and these promises, and threatenings, this advice, thus proffered to you, turns precisely on the same subject on which I am now speaking to you—they turn on Christian Morals. They profess to tell you what you ought to do, in order to make yourself what you ought to be, perfectly good, perfectly happy, and perfectly wise. But they differ very much as to the nature of the message; and, in particular, each declares, that he himself is the only one right, and that all others who have not the same credentials with himself are impostors. On every Sunday, at least, one of these professed ministers of God rises up in the old sacred building, especially called the church, and to which, and to no other, those who know the truth and value your soul would hope that you go; and he there, after many prayers, addresses you on some portion of our present subject—Christian ethics. On the same day, other persons, claiming the same title of respect, rise up in other places, which they may not call holy, and there discourse to other persons on some portion of this same subject—Christian Morals; telling them how they ought to live—how they can make themselves happy—what they ought to become.

Now, I need not tell you that these are the most important questions which man can discuss—that they are the questions on which, as a rational being, you must rule your whole life; and we have agreed

(have we not?) that in answering these, as in obtaining any other knowledge, we must be mainly at least, (I should be inclined even to say exclusively,) guided by the testimony of others who have lived longer and known more than ourselves. We agreed also that the first testimony to which we should look is that of our parents—then that of the laws of the land; and for this reason, that both of these are in some sense set over us by God; and therefore that in obeying them, we might be endeavouring to obey God, and so should at least be safe from provoking his anger against us, however we might err; for he would be satisfied with our wish and intention to do his will, even if we happened to be misled by others in its meaning. And both our parents and our civil governors agree that it is necessary for us to have, beside themselves, some other instructors in Christian ethics. They say, we have either not time, or not sufficient knowledge, or not opportunities, or, what is more true, we have no authority to undertake a certain portion of the education which is requisite to teach you your duty, and ensure you your happiness. They point to this class of persons, of whom we spoke just now, the professed ministers of God, as joined with themselves in this task, and they refer you to them for information and guidance. Your *Parents*, on Sundays, take you to church—or if, unhappily, they have departed from the church, they take you to a chapel—and the *Laws of the land* are full of rules relative to the clergy, as a body co-operating with the government in the education of the people. Parent, King, and Clergy, then, are the three authorised witnesses of God to whom you must listen. You cannot omit one without great danger and folly. And if they all happen to agree, your course is clear before you. And time was when they did agree—happier times than the

present—and times to which I would recall you, in speaking of a period 1500 years ago; but now they do not agree. Instead of one body of clergy, all teaching the same truths, and teaching by the same authority, they are split up into several. Every town, and almost every village, has two or more individuals professing to be ministers of God, and opposed to each other. And therefore, if you would think at all, and think you must, you will be compelled at one time or other to doubt, and ask which is the true minister of God—the one whom I have to follow—the one who witnesses most truly God's truths of Christian Morals, and will supply, what neither parents nor magistrates profess to give me, a certain, most important aid and instruction in the art of becoming wise, and good, and happy?

You must make your decision. And, in making this decision, let us consider calmly and quietly together what will be the safest course.

And first, then, is it a light question? Do your Parents, and does the State, tell you that it is a light thing, whether you add to their instruction the instruction of a minister of God? Or is it not the first lesson which they would teach you? Would they like you to read no religious books—to attend no religious worship—to make no prayers—to confine yourself to the lessons of your home, imperfect and often erroneous as they are, and to an abstinence from open crime, which is all the morality expressly contemplated by the statute-books of the land? Or, do they tell you, that without religion you cannot be either obedient to them, a good son, or a good citizen, or happy and good in yourself, or any thing but a curse to your fellow-creatures. They may, indeed, at times neglect to tell you this; or falter and hesitate in the selection of the religious teacher whom you are to follow; but put the ques-

tion to them boldly, and they will answer at once, that religion you must have as a part of your ethics; and to have religion, you must have a religious teacher of some kind or another distinct from themselves. In neglecting, therefore, to make some choice, you are neglecting *their testimony;* and you must do it at the same peril as if you would put a light to gunpowder when they warned you against it, or persisted in refusing to consult a physician when they told you you must die unless you do.

But consider another thing.

Suppose two or more men were some day to come before you, professing to bring each a message and communication from your sovereign; let the message contain information of the highest importance to your interest, pointing out to you a mode of securing his favour, and threatening the severest penalties on disobedience; or even without such conditions (for this is the better way to regard it), —let it be a simple message from your sovereign, suggesting a mere trifle. And when the messengers stand before you, let each charge the other with being an impostor—each declare his own message true, and the other false. Will it be a light thing to determine which should be recognised? Will not mere reverence for your sovereign require a careful examination into their respective pretensions? Will you not risk much by sending them both away in contempt, because it may be difficult to decide between them, and insult your sovereign by rejecting his true messenger and message, because some one had forged another?

Now, this is your position towards God in these unhappy days; and the very first lesson which you must be taught in Christian Ethics, is the solemn and awful responsibility laid upon your shoulders, as soon as you begin to think upon the subject, of

deciding which religious teacher you shall follow in learning the art of becoming good. You can have but one. Which shall it be?

Let us see if the following suggestions may not be useful in this choice.

First, then, does your Parent take you to the church? Does he tell you that the clergyman of the parish is to be your religious instructor? And if this is not the case, I have little intention of addressing myself to you. Here, then, you have your parent's voice to guide you first; and he has a claim from God on you to follow him. Secondly, what says your Sovereign and the laws of the land? I will not at present say what ought to be done, if the laws of the land spoke differently. And yet the government of the country, ordained as it is of God, ought to have great weight; and if your parent bade you commit an act which the laws forbade, you would be bound to disobey him, and obey the laws. And why? because of two powers both appointed by God, the Parent and the State, the State is the greater. But happily as yet you are not thus embarrassed; for the State agrees with your Parent, and recommends, and till lately it would even compel, you to take the Church for your instructor, and would prohibit others from drawing you away elsewhere, and would punish them for leading, and you for following. Even now the Church is "established;" that is, the government acknowledges it as the body whom it respects, and wishes to be respected and to be listened to by all its subjects. And so it has done for more than 1200 years.

Now with these two voices joining together, you must be running a great risk, setting at nought very grave testimony, if you adopt any other teacher than the clergyman of the parish.

Still it may be, that both these voices are wrong. There was a time when Parents were idolaters, and Kings idolaters; and Christianity came down upon earth with a message from God declaring against both; and yet men were bound to receive it. And so it may be, that among the many men professing to be Ministers from God, charged with a message to you from him on your duty and your goodness, the true one may not be the same as is selected by your Parent or your Sovereign. What are you to do? I answer, you must ask, not the clergyman, but all the others who come to you, to produce their credentials. I say, *not the clergyman;* for you have fully sufficient reason, in the witness of your Parent and of the State, to believe he is right until he is proved to be wrong. Men do not rake up the title-deeds of their estates,—do not come forth before a judge with a busy, bustling, meddling, officious offer to prove their right to a property, *until* that right is disputed; until it is disputed not merely generally, suspiciously, vaguely, but by a positive distinct charge of a flaw in some specified point, and that charge made by a party who, if you do not refute him, will turn you out and take possession. Until the charge wears this aspect, a judge would refuse to hear the cause, and a man in his senses will say nothing, do nothing, but remain firm and secure on the ground of *prescription.* And so with regard to knowledge; for knowledge is a possession; and belief is a great good; and freedom from doubt and uncertainty in following our teachers is a precious inheritance, not lightly to be parted with nor disturbed; recommended to us by God himself in his word, who bids us "walk in the old ways, and stand in the old paths;" who by his institutions in nature inclines us all to adhere to what we have received, and through this

instinct binds together into one, child with parent, man with man, generation with generation; keeping order in the movements of society; giving permanence to principles; bringing mind close to mind, that knowledge may be poured from one into the other; linking and holding all things in their place, as the creation itself is kept in place, by the same law which rolls the planets in their course—the law that all things should continue as they are, until something occurs to disturb them.

Brought up, therefore, to believe the Church, continue in it. Till a man impugns that belief, allow no doubt to intrude; and if doubt does intrude, reject it without seeking an answer—you do not need one. When a man is found to impugn it, ask him, first, if he proposes to give you any thing instead? Has he any better authority of his own? Does he offer any good, threaten any evil? Will any ulterior measures follow, if you do not listen to him? If none, turn away from him in contempt. He asks you to disallow the validity of your title to a possession wantonly, and for the sake of invalidating it, and for this only. Does he come threatening you with consequences? Bid him first produce his own title-deeds? Ask the dissenter, who claims to be a minister from God, with a right to assist you in your study and in your practice of Christian ethics, "Are you appointed? Have you been sent? Where is your commission? Where is the proof that I shall offend God by not listening to you? Where is the evidence that the message you would deliver really came from God?" Till they can shew you this, rest secure as you are. You are obeying God in obeying your Parent and your Governors. And till He sends another messenger revoking their commission, you cannot depart from

them without a grievous sin. And what the nature of this commission should be, I will tell you presently.

But I will tell you first, what the clergyman of your parish will or ought to say to you, when you are thus beset with doubts, and obliged to drive off men who threaten to intrude on his privilege of guiding and instructing you in your duty. It may be, his words may be different from these; but these are what he ought to utter. If he take other ground, he is not asserting his own rights as they may be asserted with truth, and without the possibility of their being defeated.

He would say to you, "You believe me now to be your proper religious instructor in your duty both to God and man; to have in my hands your manual of Christian Ethics; to know best the proper mode of making you good, and wise, and happy —because your parents and the laws of the land have told you this. It is a wise and adequate reason. But God has given you not only a heart to obey them and trust in them, but a mind capable of understanding in many cases the reasons of their injunctions. It is one thing, and a great thing, to do what rightful authority commands us to do; it is another thing, added on to this as an ornament, and indulgence, and confirmation, and guide, to see the wisdom and rectitude of the command. And now that you are doing your duty in putting confidence in me, I will do my duty by shewing you that I am entitled to it. I will produce to you my title-deeds. I will indulge you with a sight of my *commission* from God; prove to you that I am no pretender; not self-appointed; not a teacher of my own inventions; not a profferer of a forged message; not one who dares to promise and threaten

in the name of God, without having received His especial injunctions so to do, and His engagement to ratify my terms.

"You look on me now as an individual. Learn as the very first thing, that so far as concerns my teaching you, my claim to make you good and happy, I am not an individual, but the representative of a vast body. I have neither will of my own, reason of my own, goodness of my own, nor power of my own. Almost, as Balaam said of old (Numb. xxiv. 13), 'If thou wouldest give me thy house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of that body, to do either good or bad of mine own mind; but what that body saith, that will I speak.' I may be ignorant; I have many faults; I may be weak and old; unworthy, most unworthy, of being employed as a messenger from God to man. Or, on the other hand, I may have talents, be eloquent, be blessed with many graces, have power over many affections. But all these have little to do with my office as regards yourself. A letter is little affected by the appearance of him who brings it. A truth is still a truth, though he who reports it is in other matters a liar. Woe to me, if I so present to you my message, as that from fault of mine you shall be disinclined to receive it! But woe also to you, if you will not accept with reverence what I bring to you from God, because you dislike or despise in me something which comes from man!

"I told you that I was only the representative, the agent, of a vast body; armed with their power; declaring their words; inviting you to place yourself under their guidance, not under mine; doing little or nothing but as of them. Look round you on this side and that, and in every part of the country you will see others like myself, each in his

own district representing the same body, and ministering like me in an ancient holy building, especially called the church; each acknowledging with me the same fact, that as individuals they are nothing.

"How came we here? Did we come among you of ourselves, without any authority to send us? Should I be permitted to preach in this pulpit, or to minister at this altar, if I came and claimed a right to do so as of my own will? No; before any one of us could venture to do this, we received a special and most solemn commission from the heads and rulers of this body or society, of which I need not tell you that the name is the Church. They delegated to us the power to which, if you would ever become good, you must have recourse at our hands. They bound us to watch over you, to teach you, pray for you, enlighten you, feed you, do for your minds all that the most affectionate of parents would do for your bodies; which, if we have failed to do, as too often we have failed, the curse is upon our heads, not on them who sent us forth. And they swore us to a rigid adherence to the truths which they put into our mouth. Nothing was to be added, nothing to be taken away. A certain body of teaching we were commanded to proclaim before you, constantly and earnestly, in public and in private. It was not our own invention; it was put into our hands by others. Any thing which might win you to listen, bring you to understand it, so long as the teaching itself was not an iota altered, we were permitted and encouraged to employ. We might set the jewel in gold work, but not work which injured the stone, or hid it, or impaired its lustre; only such as would fix it in your minds, and enhance its glory."

What this teaching was, and what these powers, is not for my present purpose. But one thing you

may be told: this teaching is full of mysteries—of things which human reason, as many men around will tell you, cannot fathom, cannot reconcile with experience, cannot explain. How far these words are true, I do not attempt to assert. But I ask you, if at the very first sight this does not seem to be a mark of knowledge not invented by man. Man would not invent for man a system of belief so full, as you are here told, of contradictions and perplexities. He would try to make it simple and easy; as men, who will not receive the doctrines of the Church, try to alter them into some form, which they can explain, and others can understand. Once more, these powers are very great; they are even awful: if not truly conferred by God, they are blasphemously assumed by man. I ask you, does this seem to indicate a human invention? Impostors, indeed, have endeavoured to subdue the minds of followers by vague threats and promises, which cannot be proved, of Divine favour. But the promise of communicating to man the Divine nature itself, of bringing down the Deity from heaven, and infusing his own Spirit into the souls of miserable mortals,—this, which is nothing more than the every-day promise of the Church, proclaimed and administered by every minister of the Church every time that he stands by the font, or serves at the altar,—is it not so awful, so tremendous, that we scarcely bear to read it written, except in familiar words which scarcely touch the ear? Should we not expect that such a lie, if lie it be, if God has never sanctioned the offer, must long since have drawn down vengeance on the blasphemer, instead of being preserved for 1800 years as a great and holy treasure, the very palladium of the Church, the corner-stone of the Christian faith, the salt of the earth?

From whence, then, did the rulers of the Church

receive these truths, and the powers thus mysteriously committed to them. It was not yesterday, nor one generation back, that they were framed, and nearly in that form and order in which we now possess them. Our creeds, our articles of faith, our Bible,—these contain the system of ethical teaching by which clergymen are bound to abide, and which they are to inculcate upon you. Our liturgies and offices of worship,—these are the acts and exhibition of that power, which they are bound to exercise towards you. Whence did they come? They came to us in this land, varied slightly but not impaired in any essential part, from a still vaster Society, just as the branch of a tree receives sap from the trunk, or the limb of a man receives blood from the heart. That society was called the Catholic Church; not, remember, I entreat you, *the Romish Church:* the two things are very different, though through the Church of Rome much Christian truth did come to us. The fountain-head was farther up: it lay deep in antiquity. Trace back 1500, and more than 1500 years, and there you will find the source from which the clergy of this day trace their teaching and their powers; and to which, at the Reformation, our ancestors went back, when they suspected, or rather knew, that the stream, as it came to us through the channel of the Romish Church, had been mixed and corrupted with novel and human imaginations.

What, then, was the Catholic Church? It was a society framed to extend over the whole earth; which, like that Indian tree, might grow up in stateliness and beauty, throwing out its roots on all sides, and from them shooting up fresh trunks, each to become a giant tree itself, each to send forth new roots, and those roots new trunks and trees, until the surface of the earth was covered, and all the beasts of the field might lie down for shelter in its

shade. It was a society intended to be at once both many and one—many, in its independent branches, for every bishop and diocese constituted a distinct Church;—one, in the root from which it sprung; in the identity of doctrine which it taught; in the spirit which circulated through every limb; in the source of its powers; in its hopes, and faith, and joy, and sorrow, and love, and fear. And to this vast, and ancient, and venerable society, which did in this form exist fifteen hundred years ago, we trace what we now would teach you.

Whence, then, you will ask, did this Society itself derive their knowledge and their powers? They derived it from a body of thirteen men; who from one place, Jerusalem, travelled in every direction into the most distant lands, establishing in each a Church, that is, an independent society, with a bishop at its head. They travelled, remember, not together in a body, but separately. They imparted to every Church, which they separately founded, one set of doctrines; which that Church was charged to keep as a most precious deposit; to allow not the slightest alteration; to transmit it under the same solemn injunction to their successors—to teach it to all the members of the Church, that none might be able to falsify it without detection—to compare it constantly with the doctrines preserved in other sister Churches—to meet and condemn at once whatever opinions impugned it—"not even to listen to an angel," who should preach to them any thing different. Wherever a Church was founded, this was the course enjoined. In all was the same doctrine. But they also appointed ministers, solemnly committed to them the government of these Churches, and made them the channels for conveying through a perpetual succession the Spirit of God himself—first to the people under their care, and then to

other rulers, who should have the same power of dispensing it. The society was never to die. Branch was to propagate branch—shoot was to spring up after shoot. The sap was still to circulate—the tree still to stand—though death removed, one after the other, every atom of its substance, and transferred it to another world.

Now, I ask, is not the very existence of such a Society a strange phenomenon? Where, in the history of the world, is there any thing like it? What mysterious power watched over and fostered its growth, that in a few years it was rooted firmly in almost every known part of the habitable globe—that it stood long in the fulness of its grandeur, at once one tree and a whole grove of trees—that even now some scattered trunks are remaining, and beneath them we are gathering ourselves?

> Qualis frugifero quercus sublimis in agro
> Exuvias veteres populi, sacrataque gestans
> Dona ducum; nec jam validis radicibus hærens,
> Pondere fixa suo est; nudosque per aera ramos
> Effundens, trunco non frondibus efficit umbram;
> At quamvis primo nutet casura sub Euro,
> Tot circum sylvæ firmo se robore tollant,
> Sola tamen colitur. LUCAN. lib. i. 135.

And yet the doctrines and the powers possessed by this vast body, thus separately and yet conjointly, were none of them invented by itself. They were received, maintained, preserved as a treasure committed to its keeping by other hands—the hands of those thirteen men, whose journeys radiated from Jerusalem over nearly the whole earth. Surely these must have had grounds for thus requiring men to accept their teaching, and place themselves under their government—men, we have reason to know, most of them illiterate; all of them Jews, and therefore hated and despised—none coming with powers

of human art or human eloquence; and yet thus able to lay the foundation of a system, which not the greatest of heathen philosophers, in all their aspirations to raise a sanctuary for truth, could dare to imagine, nor the most powerful of monarchs has been able to realise. They had miracles to rouse attention. More than this, the Spirit of God went with them, entering into the hearts of those whom it adopted, and thus bringing them into union with the body; and then came additional wonders to condemn those who would not believe; and lastly, reason, and eloquence, and knowledge, to convict them by their own weapons.

And whence did the apostles themselves derive their powers and their teaching? They derived them from One who was their Teacher—who died, and rose again from the dead. And why those thirteen apostles, and all those who formed the infant Church, did thus receive implicitly from Him, as from God himself, the words, and promises, and gifts, which they imparted to all the Churches founded by them, I will not weary you by repeating. As yet we little require it. The plague of unbelief in this country has not, among educated men, yet reached our vitals. We distrust individual teachers. We think nothing of the witness of our national Church. As for the Catholic Church, its very name is shunned, as if it were a symbol of Popery. But we still believe that what the apostles taught is true, and that they taught nothing which was not sanctioned by their Lord and ours; and that what the Lord spoke were the words of God.

Such, then, are the grounds on which a minister of the Church would claim, or ought to claim to stand over you, the boy, or young man, who are now reading this little book, as your teacher and guide in the pursuit of your happiness and goodness. He has

truths, higher than man can reach, which you must learn—truths communicated by God to Christ, by Christ to his Apostles, by the Apostles to the Catholic Church, by the Catholic Church to our forefathers, from them passed on to this present generation, in this generation set before you each by the ministers whom the Church has appointed. And they have powers, mysterious and awful, which no mere human being could of himself pretend to possess; which, through the same regular channel, successively derived from Christ, he will now exercise towards you in making you what you ought to be—wise, and good, and happy.

No other professed minister of God in this country can say the same. The Romanist has received the powers; but he confesses to have altered the doctrines in the course of their transmission. The dissenter does not even pretend to have received either the powers or the doctrines. He asserts, indeed, doctrines, and some few assert powers; but both are traced to man, to some human teacher of late date, or to some conception of his own, by which one man has wrought out one scheme, and another another, from the same words of the Bible. And thus both classes alike have imagined a creed, instead of receiving it, fixed and unalterable, by an external revelation from God.

CHAPTER IV.

MY DEAR READER,—You imagine that all this has little connexion with Ethics. You think Ethics a science, in which no words are to occur, but conscience, and duty, and virtue, and vice, and expediency, and reason; that the facts and the doctrines of religion, and still more of Christianity, and still more of the Catholic Church, are out of place in a work upon morals. So we have been taught to think of late years. And men have risen up professing to teach you how to act, and to point out the way to happiness, and to analyse your affections, and to explain why this is right and that is wrong, without giving a single hint even that they believed in a God; still less that he has provided any standard or judge of right, or any means for attaining it, or any testimony to the truths which he has declared, apart from what men call the system of nature. Of old this was not so; and in the earliest times of Christianity no such thing existed as a science of morals apart from the science of religion. Christianity was the only ethical system, and Christian ministers the only ethical teachers.

For, what do you mean by *Ethics?* It is a word implying rules for forming particular characters by means of habitual actions. In one word, it is the science of education—*not of instruction*, remember, as applied solely to the filling the memory with knowledge—*but of education*, of rearing up the human mind from infancy to age, from weakness to strength; "training it in the way in which it should

go, so that when it is old it may not depart from it." But if you cannot commence any science, much less the science of morals, without learning its fundamental principles from the testimony of others, the very first thing to be done is, to shew you which testimony is to be followed. And any discussion of ethics which does not include the fact of a Catholic Apostolical Church, must be as faulty as a theory of astronomy which left out the sun. If a sculptor wishes to convert a block of marble into a statue, he must require three conditions:—First, he must have before him a clear, definite conception of the statue which he proposes to create;—secondly, he must understand accurately the nature of the marble itself;—thirdly, he must have the power of working on and moulding his materials. Without all these he must inevitably fail. Even, therefore, if the mind of man were, what it is not, to his fellow-man as the dead passive marble to the hands of the sculptor, it would be a matter of the deepest interest to inquire, if He who made man at first had in any revelation communicated any information of man's original nature, given any outline of his ultimate perfection, pointed out any means for realising it. If we search through a heathen philosopher, professedly human—through Aristotle, or Plato—for intimations on these three points, how much more should we look for the chance of intimations from God in any communication professing to come from him!

But the human mind is not as marble to the sculptor; it is not a dead, passive, inert substance, which yields unresistingly to the hand which would mould it. Far from it. It is a living thing, full of motion, and with its own laws of motion; rapid as thought, unseen, and untraceable, "glancing from heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven," and gathering at every turn innumerable combinations

of its own ideas, like the shapes in a kaleidescope. And no eye of man can follow it, and no hand or voice command its progress. And these changes do not pass away, leaving it as it was; but every one, like the thousand imperceptible touches by which time mellows a picture, or eats into a ruin, leaves its trace behind it—here a stain, and there a lustre; here adding strength, and there decay; here corroding its very heart, there consolidating and coating it with a hard and imperishable shell. What would a painter say, if, while he was working on his canvass, the lines shifted of themselves, one colour faded, another became vivid, others melted away together, all the tints and figures became floating like a quicksand, or like motes in a sunbeam,—and he knowing little or nothing of the laws of these changes, unable to see the greater part of them, incapable of combining his colours so as to keep them fixed, was told to continue his picture? Would he not recognise at once that to paint it was beyond his art; that some other power was at work, to which he must defer? And so it is with man. *The education of man is beyond the reach of man.* He knows nothing, and can know nothing, of the secret fluctuations of the mind; and without knowing these, how can he control or turn them to his purpose? For an hour, perhaps, on some great occasion of one absorbing passion, an orator may bend the mind to his will, and hold it steady to one end; but an orator is one of the rarest creations of nature; and his time is limited, and the circumstances of his action rare.

And yet, in the present age, we talk of education as an easy thing. We plan schools, and form systems, and boast of our powers, though every day, by general results of evil, is shewing that our efforts are failing; and nothing but our ignorance of what really passes in the mind—ignorance increased by

the facility with which our present mode of instruction tutors the young to conceal their thoughts—nothing but this prevents us from tracing the mischief in the case of individuals.

And therefore, my dear reader, when I, this little book, am coming to you in the hope of improving your mind, and when you are placed, as soon you will be, in some post of authority over your fellow-creatures—over a child, or a friend, or a pupil, or the poor, or a people—let us both remember, that to control these minds does not belong to us; that He only who made and beholds them can mould them as He chooses; that *education belongs unto God.*

And yet man is commanded to educate. What is all government but a branch of education? What are schools, books, lectures, punishments and rewards, promises and threatenings, but means of education? And without these, what will become of the world? It will fall into ruin, if man neglect his duty; and education is one of his first and grandest duties; and yet he is wholly unable to educate. Here is another paradox. He can no more hope to educate than he can hope to calculate correctly a sum of which half the items are unseen, and the other half alter as he counts them. What, then, can he do? He can combine certain outward circumstances; he can apply certain stimulating objects; he can proclaim certain truths; he can set before the eyes of others spectacles and examples for imitation or avoidance; —but in so doing he is working in the dark; he cannot see how they will affect the mind; he must trust to Providence to turn to good what he himself has contrived for good.

And now, if you can realise this fact, you will see why, as every inquiry into ethical science is virtually a treatise on education, so every act of education throws us back upon a search for some com-

munication from God, telling us what the human mind is, which we cannot see; giving us *positive rules* for combining our external circumstances, so that if these fail, we shall at least have the satisfaction of having acted in obedience to God; promising, moreover, the gift of some Supernatural Influence to work where we cannot penetrate, softening, and moulding, and bending to our touch, man's nature in the inmost recesses of his heart. Without this, education is a dream. It is empty speculation, guess-work, gambling, in which the best-planned schemes may fail, and the worst answer; and no consolation will remain for disappointment, and no satisfaction in success. And to obtain this, we must recur to Revelation; for Revelation we must go to the Apostles; for communication with the Apostles we must go to the Catholic Church. And thus our ancestors, who cleared away from our own system the corruptions of Popery, did fall back on the witness of those good and wise men who lived fifteen hundred years ago; and we must do so likewise.

But I will mention another reason why Education, and therefore Ethics, unconnected with the Church, is a fundamental fallacy. I have said what many will think strange, that man by himself is *unable* to educate man; I add now, what many will think stranger, that without the Church *he has no right* to educate him. If man stands before his fellow-mortals as a human creature only, whence does he derive the right to interfere with and control them? It may seem expedient for the general peace, but every man will deem himself the best judge of his own interest. It may be agreeable to a parent's conscience, or a teacher's sense of duty; but his conscience is no better authority, simply as the conscience of a man, than the equally strong conviction of the child, that no control is necessary or useful.

It may be imposed by the laws of the land; but if the laws of the land themselves are merely human, how is this right in them to be reconciled with the fundamental maxim of modern politics, that "all men are equal?" One thing, indeed, remains,—"physical force." The stronger must educate the weak—educate him after his own fashion—take on himself the responsibility of shaping and moulding an immortal spirit, which will retain this shape, and with it the infinite consequences attached to it, of good or of evil, throughout an infinite existence of happiness or of misery. But you think you will do him good; you wish to improve him! Even so you may think you would improve your neighbour's garden, and contribute to his comfort, by cutting down some trees or turning a walk; but the utmost benevolence of intention will not save you from an action of trespass, if he prohibit your entrance on his premises. And if a child will stand sentinel at the door of his heart and deny you access, and demand your right to meddle with the formation of his character—(and what child will not readily catch the plea?), and you have no answer to give, but that you are a man with a stronger arm, and wish to do him good in a way which he does not like,—will not the school-room very soon become a scene of rods and scuffles; and education be a mere tyranny, with sullen, indignant, discontented, contemptuous subjection on the one hand, and arbitrary, irritated brute force lording it on the other? Be assured that no power in the world exists except by derivation or permission from God; and that all power used without a solemn acknowledgment of its Author is an usurpation; and man will not obey, and God will visit it with a curse. If you educate as a parent, remember that a parent is to his family the type and representative of God. If as a civil governor, recall the noble words of our

old English constitution, "Rex est vicarius Dei." If as a minister of religion, let not your words or acts be seen to come from man, but trace them all to God. Stand always before the child as the minister and representative of God; and then you will have a right to educate him, which he cannot dispute, which he will willingly allow.

But for this very reason you cannot educate without the Church; no! nor without a distinct positive revelation from God, declaring the validity even of those appointments which seem to be made by nature. If the Parent and the State stand over the child as ministers of God, the child will ask for their credentials. And how these credentials are to be conveyed, except by a distinct revelation, it is hard to say. The Parent now will answer with the fifth commandment, "Honour thy father and thy mother;" and the State with the express declaration of the Apostle, "Fear God, and honour the king." But without some such voice from heaven, the mere facts that a child is born from a parent, and that government must exist wherever there is society, and society wherever there is man, would scarcely be sufficient to sustain a claim to a divine authority. Therefore both parental and civil authority require the support and witness of the Church, or they fall to the ground. But when they thus recognise the existence of the Church as a commissioned ambassador from God, they must also recognise its full powers. If two ministers from a court are negotiating in a foreign country, and a third is sent out to them armed with additional authority, not to supersede, indeed, but to control and aid them; if those two will persist in acting without the third, or will trespass on his privileges, they are disobeying their master, betraying their cause, annihilating their own commission. And thus, if either Parent or State

attempt to educate man without the co-operation of the Church, without giving to it its due prominence and precedency, without allowing, nay, requiring the exercise of all the powers committed to it, they are flying in the face of their Lord and Master, and they must take the consequences.

Education without the Church is an absurdity; and therefore a system of Ethics which is not based upon the system of the Church, must be an absurdity likewise.

CHAPTER V.

WHAT, then, you may ask, is the difference between Ethics and the Catholic religion? If I am to be placed under the guidance of the Church, and the Church is ready in all points to act as my teacher, what need of any other system? This question I now propose to answer. Let us see the whole difficulty. Christianity, then, contains a system of truths relating to the nature of man, to its destination, the means of perfecting it, the knowledge necessary for its perfection, the laws of its conduct, its relation and duties to other beings. The science of Ethics contains a system, or rather as many systems as there are ethical writers, in which doctrines are propounded on precisely the same subject. The Church with the Bible is on one side; Plato, and Aristotle, and Zeno, and Epicurus, and Locke, and Hobbes, and Paley, and Rousseau, on the other. What are the differences between them?

First, then, one comes from God; the other from man.

Secondly, the one which comes from God, whether we understand it or not, we are bound to receive; the other, coming only from man, we must examine for ourselves.

Thirdly, from this cause, it is absolutely necessary that the human system should appear in a scientific form—that is, that it should be drawn out from certain axioms and principles; the reasons for its conclusions given—the positions ranged in regular deductions—in order that at each step the under-

standing of the hearer may witness to the accuracy of the teacher: whereas the system which comes from God may be presented to us piece-meal, as it were, in scattered portions, "here a line and there a line." If an army have full and implicit confidence in their general, they will execute all his orders, though no one soldier knows why he does this, or his comrade does that; the plan of operation is reserved in the mind of the commander. But if they have no confidence in him, they will persist in requiring to be told each the why and the wherefore of the injunctions, and he must lay the chart before them in a formal shape.

Fourthly, as a necessary consequence, in receiving on testimony the system of Christianity, we abandon our own judgment of its contents, put our trust in God, and make his word the standard of truth. In studying human ethics, we take our own feelings, knowledge, experience, or conscience, as the test of true and false, each individual for himself and on each particular point. We may therefore acknowledge it in parts; Christianity we must take as a whole, without any deduction or reservation.

Fifthly, as that which comes from God must be true, and truth can be only one, there cannot be many systems of Christian, as there are of heathen ethics. There can be no sects or schools within the Church. In all points acknowledged to be *revealed* there must be uniform agreement; an agreement not founded on the conviction of the understanding —for different persons can scarcely ever see the same principles in precisely the same light—but on a conviction of the heart, that what such and such an authority declared to be revealed, was revealed; and that what was revealed is true, whether we can explain it or not.

Such being some of the differences between the

two systems, let us now see some of their resemblances. And the main resemblance, next to the identity of subject, is this: that exactly in proportion as human reason has made accurate observations of the human mind—has traced out its laws correctly—has been directed by good feelings to good ends, in the same proportion it will approach to truth, and therefore to Christianity. Now, there never was a time when human reason was so acute and profound —when there were such opportunities of seeing it laid bare in all its evil forms—and, therefore, when good and great minds were roused to grapple with it with such vigorous and noble exertions, as in the age of Plato and Aristotle. If you would understand anatomy, you must study it in the bodies of the dead. If you would be a good physician, you must practise in a lazar-house. And Greece was a lazar-house of morals; and one blessed effect it did produce, that it raised up the noblest minds to wrestle with the plague, and aid us in wrestling with it also. Thus, too, no ethical speculator since them has ever approached to their excellence, or so near to the system of the gospel. For this reason, also, they are the proper writers to be studied, when we would know what man by himself has thought of man: and Plato even more than Aristotle—first, because his nature and character were more like what a Christian character would be; he had more heart, and feeling, and affection—and, secondly, from a cause, which offers another point of resemblance between Christian and heathen Ethics.

Plato, to a considerable degree, derived his knowledge of Ethics from an ancient revelation. For, even before the coming of Christ, man had not been left without an external declaration of his duties. The ten commandments, and all the other moral portions of the Mosaic laws, were not wrought out by the

reason of Moses, but written by the finger of God. Before Moses, revelations had been made to Abraham and the patriarchs; before them to Noah; before Noah to Adam. Never, I entreat you, listen to silly talkers, who would tell you that man sprung out of the ground in a rude and helpless state; that they began with living on pignuts, and scraping holes in the ground; and that God left them to shift for themselves—to form their own language, their own society, their own morals, their own religion. God never left them to themselves, till they had first abandoned God. When they did not choose to retain God in their thoughts, God then gave them over to a reprobate mind, but not before.[1] And, till then, He was constantly warning them by his own voice, by parents, and kings, and priests, and prophets. And thus in the East, where these kings, and priests, and prophets were formed into vast empires and hierarchies, standing like a gigantic temple on the solid foundations of antiquity, the light of God's primitive revelations was kept alive; lingering on like the long twilight in northern skies, while on all the rest of the earth, and especially on Greece, a thick darkness fell down, and men were compelled to walk by a light which they kindled for themselves. And yet how little this light could serve them, may be learnt from the fact, that Plato, who, of all the Greeks, approached nearest to the truth, traces the chief part of his knowledge from the East and oriental traditions—that Aristotle wanders wrong as soon as he deserts the instructions of his master Plato—that almost all that is good either in Grecian poetry or Grecian science may be traced to the East, as to a root. As if no knowledge could spring up in man, except it flowed originally from

[1] Rom. i. 28.

the first and only fountain of truth—the voice of God. Both Christian, then, and heathen Ethics are based on a revelation from God.

I will mention to you two other points of comparison between Christian and unchristian Ethics. And I dwell on these points at length, because, as you will one day see, the whole character of your ethical study and instruction must depend on your knowledge of them. Building a house is one thing, and choosing between architects is another; but this choice must precede the building, and when it has been wisely made, you have little else to think of. And you are now learning to build up in your own heart that which a holy man of old called "the Inner House of man"—a shrine of truth, and a sanctuary for the Spirit of God.[1] And you cannot build it of yourself; you must go to architects.

One point, then, to be observed, is, that all systems alike come, and must come to you, with the same declaration, that if you are to study them at all, you must begin by taking the word of their respective teachers as a guarantee for the truth of them. You must act upon, before you understand them; and by acting on them, you will see if they are false. If I offer you a sovereign, you may doubt if it be good; but unless you take it in your hand, *as if it were good*, and proceed to make some purchase with it, you will never know whether it be good or bad. You are told that a river is ten feet deep. You do not believe it. Will not believing it, ever shew you whether it is so or not? No; you will act at once *as if it were that depth*. You take a pole of that length, and you sound, and the proof is there at once. If you are told that a book will amuse you, you will never know the fact, till you act precisely the same,

[1] See a very beautiful tract, included in the works of St. Bernard, entitled *De Interiore Domo*.

as if you were sure it was amusing, and proceed to read it. You cannot learn the truth of any statements, without assuming them as true, and acting upon them, before you have proved them. The proof lies in the application. And thus St. Paul calls faith, or belief in what is told us, the only mode of bringing to the test things which we see not, ἔλεγχος τῶν μὴ βλεπομένων.[1] And still more clearly our Lord says, that if we would know his doctrine, whether it be of God, we must first do his will.

If the Church did not insist on these terms, it would be belying the fundamental condition of all human knowledge. Aristotle insists on them likewise. He says that students must believe principles,[2] and learn the cause of them afterwards—that they must submit to be guided by their teachers, before they can follow them from the heart. The very fact of writing a book implies that you think yourself wiser than your reader. And if you are wiser, he ought to listen to you. He is ignorant, and if he would be taught, he must believe what you say. And we do believe men willingly, when we choose them ourselves. We say to ourselves, This man is clever, or good, or learned; and it is not necessary for me to take the trouble of throwing into syllogisms, and proving by induction, every thing he says. I will trust him without. Look through any book, and see how small a part is ever stated in the form of strict reasoning—how little there is for which any proof is assigned—how few readers ever think of supplying the defect themselves! And all which is not thus proved rests upon faith. Look, also, not only to the great schools of ancient philosophy—so many of them built upon the words

[1] Heb. xi. 1. [2] Ethic. Nicom. c. 2.

of their master, like the *αὐτὸς ἔφα* of Pythagoras—so many more knowing themselves only by the name of their master,—but to the blind fanatical enthusiasm, with which moderns have actually deified the teachers whom they have selected for themselves. So the Alexandrians spoke of their masters. So Lucretius speaks of Epicurus. So Cicero of Plato. So the French worshipped Rousseau. And men in modern days have not scrupled thus willingly to receive the bare testimony of such writers, on the very subjects on which men's opinion may most justly be suspected—namely, abstruse metaphysical and moral problems; while they have rejected or despised the tried and persecuted testimony of the Catholic Church to a simple fact—the fact that a certain system of doctrines has been handed down in it from its first Founder, and that Founder a being of superhuman powers; and that these doctrines have from the earliest times been heard in churches, taught to children, embodied in prayers, set forth in ceremonies before the *eyes and ears of thousands in distinct and remote countries.* But so it is. When men will not honour their fathers and their mothers, whom God has appointed to be their teachers, they must honour some one, and they will bow down before fools or madmen. When they refuse to retain God in their knowledge, they will worship idols.

One more point of resemblance is worthy of your deepest attention. An ethical system which is not to be perpetuated—which is to die away with its author—is an empty vanity. The mere pride of founding a school is enough to make men look to posterity. But he who possesses a truth, which he knows to be a truth, and a heart which is susceptible of compassion for the blindness of man, and of affection for his fellow-beings, and of zeal for the

glory of God, will make it one of his first objects to preserve that truth in the world down to the latest generations. Earnestness in this object is one of the many signs of a true system. The history of the various machinery invented for this purpose would occupy a long time; but it would be very instructive. Great hierarchies have been the chief means employed in the East. Large bodies of priests, with colleges, revenues, spiritual power, the possession of science and art, and other means of ruling the people, were contrived for the purpose of enshrining truth and communicating it safely to man. And without something of the kind, truth could never be preserved. But, in heathen times, these hierarchies, for the most part, became either so absolute as to command the civil Power, or so weak as to fall under its control; and in either case the truth was corrupted; in the former, by the ambition of the priesthood, now left without a check; in the latter, by the capricious interference of the secular arm. The Greek philosophers endeavoured to establish schools. They named their own successors. But as they had no powers to confer—as these successors were mere individuals—and as the doctrines committed to them were originally worked out by human reason, and therefore might fairly be altered by human reason again,—their doctrines soon became perverted. Aristotle's was lost almost immediately after his death. Plato's soon degenerated into a system the very opposite of the original. The other sects vanished by degrees. Pythagoras alone seems to have had the idea of establishing a number of *branch-societies* in different places, each preserving and transmitting the same system of truths, under a religious and mysterious obligation. And these societies, though overthrown by a popular

outbreak, do appear to have held their ground for some time, and to have been the means of conveying to later Greek philosophy many of the older traditions, which Pythagoras had learned in the East. The later Platonists endeavoured to establish a "golden chain" of ordained teachers, χρύσεα σειρά,[1] for the evident purpose of rivalling the Apostolical Succession of the Christian Church. But only one or two links were formed. And no individuals could preserve uncorrupted any system whatever of doctrines; nor was there any system committed to them, so definite and precise as to be intended for such preservation.

In modern times, men have enlisted themselves voluntarily under the banners of particular teachers, and formed sects and schools, and sometimes secret societies for the propagation of doctrines. But here, also, there can be no obligation to keep the system uniformly unchanged; and rather there is every facility and temptation to corrupt it, as circumstances may seem to require. But the newest invention of the day is printing. Books by themselves, thrown out before the public eye, without any body of men to preserve them from being tampered with, or to point out their one true interpretation, are supposed to be a sufficient guarantee for the transmission of definite truth from age to age. And this in the face of the fact, that scarcely a book can be named, which has thus come down to us, about which the most violent disputes have not arisen as to its authenticity and the meaning of its contents. But, perhaps, what I said at the beginning, on the nature of written teaching, may throw some little light on this notion.

Now compare all these plans with the plan of

[1] Eunapius, Vit. Philosoph.

the Catholic Church. It is, in the first place, essentially independent of any human power. It is founded by God; and God has promised to protect it, if it will not trust to any arm of flesh. It is prohibited from trespassing on the rights of kings and legislatures, that it may not be tempted to reduce them into subjection, and so, being left without a check, may abuse its power. Its rulers are individual bishops, assisted by councils of clergy in each diocese; because monarchies are far less subject to change than popular bodies. Its supreme authority lies in a council of these bishops, that no individual bishop may be at liberty to exceed his privileges, or tamper with the truth. Each diocesan church is especially enjoined to lay the one true doctrine publicly before men, that it may not be suppressed or perverted. And thus, though each separate branch is liable to error, yet all together as a Catholic body they would preserve the truth, just as nature has formed different lenses in the eye, in order to transmit the light; and as the aberrations of the planets are corrected by their mutual influences, so that while no one goes wholly right, the whole system does not go wrong; and as human art puts together a variety of metals of different degrees of expansion, in order to frame a machine which shall not expand at all. Each portion of the Church is under solemn obligations neither to add nor take away. Unlike a human invention, the truth which they hold from God cannot be amended or enlarged. It may be illustrated, applied, developed, enforced, but nothing more. The Church is to witness and keep what has been committed to it. And this is enough. And it must hold up the truth before the world at all risks; not trusting to any power but God to write it on the heart; and leaving every thing to Him: so that no temptation is held out to exaggerate, or suppress, or

modify the message which it delivers, with the view of alluring men. Popery (remember, I entreat you, the difference between Catholicism and Popery)—Popery first broke up this beautiful system, by merging all the separate channels for conveying the truth into one—by converting the federal union of independent bishops, acting together as a council, into one monarchy in the person of the pope—by claiming for that pope an extravagant authority over the civil arm; so that with the acquisition of temporal wealth and power, religion became corrupted—by assuming a right in successive generations to add to the body of truth received from the Apostles;—and lastly, by shutting up the Bible. For the Bible is another important feature in this contrivance for the unbroken transmission of truths, just as written laws guard judges against wrong decisions—as written instructions limit, confirm, and explain an oral message—as written history is a support to the ordinary testimony of mankind to traditional facts. It would seem that in the first of God's revelations to Adam there was a Church, or society of men, appointed to convey the truth from age to age; but without any written word. In the next, delivered to the Jews, there was both a society and a written word; but the society was not Catholic. It was confined to one nation and country; and when the Jews went astray, the light became lost; until, in the later period of their history, some approach was made to a Catholic Church by the dispersion of the Jews over the world, and the formation of numerous independent communities, each with their own synagogue and teachers, in a variety of places. Then came the Catholic Church, with its written word likewise. And thus, notwithstanding the usurpation of Popery, and the still worse

errors of modern Dissent, which would blot out the testimony of the Church from the plan, as Popery blotted out its Catholic character and the written Word, and would thus leave every man with his own judgment alone to guide him in interpreting, or rather misinterpreting, the Bible—notwithstanding this, the great truths of the Gospel have been handed down to our own time unimpaired from their original integrity, as delivered to the Church by the apostles. 1800 years have past, and yet still they are in our hands, and God's promise has been thus far fulfilled, that he would be with his Church unto the end of the world. And even now, in these evil days, when men are scoffing at truth, and harassing God's ministers, and despising his word; boasting each one his own conscience as the only rule of action, and his own understanding as the one judge of truth, until all action has become self-indulgence, and the very name of truth a farce,—it may be, that, if Englishmen do their duty, God has yet a blessing in store for us. And the light which, of his great goodness, he has yet kept alive in the Church of this land, burning constantly, though dimly and in darkness, instead of being extinguished, as men threaten, may be fed with oil from heaven, and once more break forth, and spread abroad—"a light to lighten the gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel."

CHAPTER VI.

WHY, then, you will ask, if we have all the ethical truth which we require to know contained in the system of the Church, and in the words of the Bible, why go to mere heathens—to Aristotle and Plato—to study inferior systems, only because they are thrown into a more technical and scientific form of demonstration? And this question of the connexion between Christian and heathen ethics, or, as it is commonly termed, between faith and reason, is of the greatest importance.

I answer, then, first, that although almighty God has been pleased to place before us a whole system of moral truths in an irregular and unscientific form, scattered through the pages of the Bible, and delivered separately, and, as it were, by fits and starts, and only on the ground of authority, and as circumstances required, by the voice of the Church—so that the system, as it comes before us with precept and promise, history and prophecy, sacraments and preaching, poetry and narrative, ceremonies and liturgies, all confusedly mixed together, scarcely seems a system at all; and though there may be many reasons given why this should be the wisest plan, yet He by no means would exclude us from trying in some degree to arrange these dismembered fragments, to discover their mutual dependence, to trace general principles running throughout them, to classify them under heads, to put them into form and order. He has not prohibited this, when done reverently and modestly.

First, because he has made it natural that we should wish to do so. An intelligent mind, when told a multitude of facts, will always try thus to classify, and arrange, and account for them by their mutual connexion. It is the very office of human reason to work in this manner on the heterogeneous materials of knowledge: "I gave my heart," says the Preacher,[1] "to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven; this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith." So it is that the physical philosopher, the geologist, the botanist, the chemist, observes the various facts of nature, deduces their general laws, and makes out a system from them. And God seems to have put Nature, and indeed all knowledge, before man in this disarranged, dislocated form, that man may amuse himself with putting it in order, just as a child is amused with fitting together the pieces of a dissected map. If God, in giving us Revelation, had given it to us all perfect, and every part in place; if he had not left a window in the palace of Truth unfinished, that man might have, as it were, a share in the work, we should have had nothing to do but to sit down and gaze; and gazing, we should soon have been tired. But now there is opportunity for acting, for exercising thought, for participating in the work with God himself. We can indeed add nothing; and we dare not take away any thing. But we may transpose and fit together the different portions in an infinite variety of ways; provided always we take care not to lose the smallest iota, or damage it by carelessness or presumption.

But, secondly, not only is this task very delightful, and so to be considered a great luxury and

[1] Eccles. i. 13.

indulgence vouchsafed us by almighty God; but to some persons it is highly necessary. In a manufactory of watches, it is enough for the lower workmen to be told, one to make a wheel, another to polish a spring, a third to fasten a rivet, a fourth to insert a chain. Let each do well and zealously what he is bidden, and that is enough, without any information as to the general end in view, or the mode in which this spring is to act upon that wheel, or the fastening of the rivet is to be made subservient to the insertion of the chain. There is no necessity for any study of the art of watchmaking in the form of a *science*. But if the master-manufacturer, instead of superintending every department immediately himself, thinks fit to employ others for that purpose, who are to distribute the work, arrange the labourers, examine the productions,—then these men must study the whole *science* of watchmaking. They must know first principles, take a comprehensive view of every part, see the dependence of each on each. Without such science, they must be incompetent to their office. Now, this world is a vast manufactory of moral beings; and all who have to govern men, whether legislators or clergy, or any one in a position of authority, are, if I may so speak, the head clerks and superintendents; and of that superintendence they will have to render a most solemn account. And therefore they must learn, not only the articles of the Christian faith, but how, and when, and to whom, and in what combinations, and under what circumstances, to apply them to others. They must learn them *scientifically*.

But they are also the commanders of an army, placed at the head of that army, in the midst of enemies and dangers, by the hand of their King. And when those enemies are attacking them, the

common soldier indeed has nothing to do but to fire his gun, and stand firm at his post, and follow the word of command; but the officers must cast their eye over the whole field of action. They must know the strength of each position—how they are supported by communication with each other—which column is to be pushed forward against this charge—which troop will best disperse that—how much the soldier will bear—how far the enemy can penetrate. Now this is the *science* of military tactics. Place before an untutored eye a plan of the battle of Waterloo, and it will appear a mass of confusion. But it was no mass of confusion to him who arranged it. And if he had not arranged it, where would England have been at this day? And where, humanly speaking, will the faith of the Church be, the doctrines which the Church is appointed to guard and keep victorious, as on a field of battle, if those who have to lead the battle do not understand it, so far as God allows us to understand it, *scientifically?*

And they are also the schoolmasters of the Church: their duty is to excite thought, and guide reasoning, and rear up a body of active intelligent minds, who shall fill their places when they are gone. This cannot be done without rousing inquiry, and often doubt. It never can be done, unless the teacher has a thorough command over the truth which he would communicate. You, a pupil, may learn by rote: but a master cannot teach by rote; nor can he answer questions by rote; nor can he always refuse to answer, without stifling the desire of knowledge, which he wishes properly to encourage, nor in many cases without exciting in the pupil either suspicion or contempt. For this purpose, therefore, he must again study the Ethics of Christianity *scientifically.*

Once more, without any reference to usefulness or pleasure, knowledge is in itself a good. To see clearly through a mist of difficulties—to trace unity in a multitude of operations—to obtain permanent universal principles for the regulation of thought—to contemplate order instead of disorder (and this is the task of science),—surely almighty God would not have given to us all such longings and yearnings for this end, as for the very perfection of our nature, had it been wrong itself, had it not been a great good, so long as, in pursuing it, we rigidly guard against violating his express commands. He has placed us within the palace of Truth, of which he himself has laid the foundations, fixed the walls, prescribed the form in his own direct revelations. He has set teachers and witnesses over us to point out these foundations, to warn us against disturbing a single brick or tile which he himself has fixed. But when we obey their voice, and reverently confine ourselves to his will, he does not prohibit us, as Origen remarks,[1] from wandering about through all the apartments of that vast building, penetrating from room to room, fitting keys to each lock, opening the hidden passages, tracing out the whole plan, and acquiescing with delight and exultation in the sight of its wisdom, harmony, and proportion. Till this is discovered, the human mind cannot rest. There is a chain upon its hands, a mote before its eye, a confused murmur in its ear, a disturbed obscurity and doubt, like the anxiety of a perplexed dream. "Clear away this mist from my eyes," was the prayer of Ajax.[2] "Give light, and in light destroy me"—ἐν δὲ φάει καὶ ὄλεσσον. And we also may pray for light. And God will not destroy us, if we are content with the light that he

[1] Philocal. c. 2. [2] Homer.

vouchsafes, and "will not kindle a fire, and compass ourselves about with sparks, and walk in the light of our fire, and in the sparks that we have kindled:" knowing the threatening of God, "This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow."[1]

And now we may come to the chief use of heathen ethics. To study a subject scientifically, which is not already scientifically arranged, is a difficult and hazardous process. Men must deal boldly with facts; they must risk hypotheses; they must sound and explore every principle,—just as a man, informing himself of the labyrinth of an ancient building, must force his way through passages, and try locks, and, in a certain degree, deal with it rudely, as one having power over it. But if the house be a consecrated building, the very stones precious, the smallest portions to be guarded against mutilation and displacement, even against the stain of an unwashed hand, surely it were not wise to expose it to such irreverent observations. When a painter sits down to take the portrait of a dear friend, or an illustrious character, he must understand the anatomy of the human body, the order of its bones, the play of its muscles, the whole science of the human frame. But he must not gain this by dissecting the person whom he paints. And yet he must gain it somewhere. Would it not be a happy thing, if he could find some viler human body, containing the same organs generally, and exhibiting the same outline carefully defined, in which he might grope about, and scrutinise each fibre, without fear of irreverence or injury? Would it not be well to teach the knowledge of a glorious palace, by turning the curious eye and adventurous foot into a meaner building like it, where they might

[1] Isa. l. 11.

wonder without doing harm, and practise the art of discovery as boldly and adventurously as they choose, and sharpen their intellectual faculties, and learn the truth, but innocently and safely? This, then, is the great value of the Greek philosophy. It is the anatomical preparation — with all the fibres, muscles, and veins, drawn out and injected — of that ethical system, which in Christianity comes before us as a living and breathing form; its mechanism covered with a veil, glowing with life and action; its eye, its hand, its limbs, its head, all visible — but the chords by which they are moved buried out of sight.

And as men, who would study to perfection the human form, seek for it in its highest models — as they reject a specimen where limbs are deficient, and organs indistinct (except indeed as a monstrosity), — so those who know any thing of ethical science will study it in the works of the two greatest philosophers that ever lived, Plato and Aristotle. Modern systems are but fragments; or they are deficient in essential parts; or they are monstrous, from the disproportioned development of some particular organ. The Greeks are not perfect; but they are as near to perfection as human reason has ever approached.

And there is another point of view in which the ethics of heathenism, and of human philosophy generally, will often strike your mind, but in which you will require a caution. You will see in them the human mind struggling by itself to attain its perfection — uttering faint cries like an infant, to signify wants which it cannot express — yearning for some light to fall on it, some hand to guide it — wandering now into the wildest errors, now reaching grand truths, and now arriving, by the use of reason, at paradoxes and mysteries; and you

will then turn to Christianity, and see the aid promised to those struggles—the interpretation and the answer given to those cries—the light and the hand vouchsafed—the errors marked with warning landmarks—the truths brought home, by simple faith, to the child and the peasant—the paradoxes and mysteries set forth, not to the perplexity of reason, but to confirm and support it. No evidence to the truth of Christianity is so wonderful and so overpowering as the testimony of heathen philosophers. And yet, what do you want with such evidence? And is it not full of danger? And—what will come more home to your young and doubting intellect—is it not *irrational* to admit it? What would you say to a man who, in telling you some simple fact, about which there could be no reasonable doubt, should insist on proving it to you by an abundance of argument? "I met Mr. So and So in the street." "Very well; I dare say you did." "But I assure you I did." "I have no reason to doubt it." "But do let me give you some proof." "I never knew you tell an untruth; and you can have no object in deceiving, and I none in disbelieving you; pray, spare me." "But I must shew you the internal probability, how likely it was that I should meet him." "I am quite content with your word." "I wish you would not trust my word; I do wish you would look to the evidence." "Why, is not your own word sufficient evidence?" "No; as a rational being, you ought not to listen to me; you ought to look to your own understanding." "What, on a matter of fact?" "Yes; on every thing."

This is the dialogue which has been passing now for many years between the Church of Christ, and the young whom it has received into its fold. Add to it, that the matter in question is one of the

deepest importance: in which infinite good must follow from believing, and no harm; and infinite harm from disbelieving, and no good. Add to it, that the very office of the Church is to educate and govern; and that the very first thing required for this purpose is, that the pupil should put implicit confidence in the truth of the teacher; and that the teacher should never permit his word to be disputed, or his character for veracity slighted. Add that She is the messenger of God, armed with His authority and name. Add that the reason to which She appeals, in preference to her own voice, is the judgment of an ignorant fallible individual. Add that in no other branch of knowledge does man permit a demand for evidence, except from a superior. Add that, to distrust man's word is of all insults the most offensive, and one which the law of human pride cannot wipe out, except with blood. Add that this very evidence on which the poor, weak, self-distrusting mind is thus cruelly thrown, rests, and must rest ultimately on the same basis of historical testimony, which by the appeal is set at nought. Add, lastly, not as if it ought to come last, but because an unbelieving age will not listen to positive law till it has consulted expediency and reason, that God himself has commanded us to believe His voice and the voice of His messengers. Think of all these things, and then you will see why I warn you against looking to the philosophy of Christian morality, brought out though it be into fullest light by the darkness of antecedent heathenism, as an evidence of the truth of Christianity. You do not want it. You have already two good legs, why insist on fastening on a third, and that a wooden one? You may indeed use it as a walking-stick. It will strengthen you when weak; may save you at times from a fall; will enable you to use your own limbs

with more energy and freedom; and you may drive off dogs with it, and beat down brambles that entangle you; and sound the path, when you are walking where others have not walked before; and amuse yourself with it as with a companion. But if you lean on it wholly, it will break and pierce your hand. It is full of flaws. It never was intended to bear the weight of your faith, which nothing can support but the pillar of the Catholic Church. You put confidence in a friend's character. A man brings forward a new proof of its goodness. You may delight in hearing it—contemplating it—not as an evidence, scarcely as a confirmation, for no one requires proof of that which he believes already; but it is a new portraiture, an additional instance, a fresh phenomenon; and it gratifies you, as a philosopher is gratified by tracing an indisputable principle in an infinite variety of forms. But tell your friend that you trust him, not because of his word, but because your reason is convinced by the plausibility of his story, and what becomes of your friendship? And accept the statements of the Church of Christ, not on its voice, but on the internal evidence of their correctness, and what becomes of your love, and respect, and allegiance, and all the other moral affections which a poor, miserable, blind child owes to a great, good, and glorious body—the blessing of the world—and the ambassador, and more than ambassador of God—affections which the Bible sums up in the one word, *Faith*—without which, what is man?

CHAPTER VII.

AND now I have suggested to you two great truths, which must be laid as the foundation of the study of Ethics:—first, that in prosecuting that study you must take the Catholic Church as your guide; secondly, that you must also borrow the assistance of the great heathen writers of antiquity.

But before we pass from this point, let me bring out more distinctly certain other precepts involved in these, of which, till you become more deeply acquainted with the philosophical disputes of the day, you will not see all the importance, but which, be assured, you will require thoroughly to understand, and to apply them in a variety of ways. For Ethics, remember, is the science of the mind of man; and the mind of man is the agent to which all sublunary moral movement, not generated mechanically or by a miraculous power, must be traced; and a false bias given to it will penetrate into all its operations; and the risk of such a bias at present exists, and must be studiously avoided.

When, then, you are placed down before the collection of ethical facts which history, biography, daily life, the creations of art, the records of our own consciousness, present to us,—just as the earth, in its mines, and strata, and landslips, and fossils, exhibits its collection of geological facts; and when by the side of these, yet lying unarranged and scattered, you find also a variety of distinct theories marshalled under separate leaders,—you have the choice of proceeding in your study in one of the three following ways. You may become either a Ration-

alist, an Eclectic, or a Syncretist. The names may sound strange, and, at first, unintelligible; but the principles implied by them are very widely spread; and you cannot study ethics without becoming acquainted with them. Read German works, and you will be tempted to Rationalism; French works, and they encourage Eclecticism; English works, or rather (for we have few works in this country on the subject, except our new scheme of legislation and education) look at the daily acts of our government, and you will see the workings of Syncretism. What they severally are, I now propose to shew.

First, then; you may resolve on forming a new theory of your own. On this I have touched already. You say to yourself, "I have reason. Reason was given me to be exerted. What is the use of it, if I am not to search out truth? I will become an independent inquirer, an original thinker. Truth, not the opinion of others, is to be my object and rule." So said Locke; so said Rousseau; so says Mr. Owen; so says every leader of error that ever founded a pernicious system, either in morals or religion. They are all ardent admirers of Truth. And, be assured, the moment a man professes this earnest enthusiasm for truth, you have reason to distrust him. There can scarcely be a surer sign that his theory will prove a lie. It is a strange paradox, is it not? And yet let us see if it is false. Truth—and here lies the fallacy—has two distinct meanings. In one sense truth is the great object of life, the basis of morals, the end of study, the law supreme over thought, and action, and affection,—the fountain of all good things lying deep under the throne of God, and flowing thence into the heart of man. In the other sense, it is a fancy, a dream, an *ignis fatuus*, a mere earthly shadow, tempting us at every step to folly, and always to be

suspected of evil. The Author of all Evil never invented a more ingenious device for snaring man and leading him blindfold into ruin, and sowing discord and violence in the world, and overturning its foundations, than this double sense of the word Truth.

In the one sense, then, Truth means the eternal, unchangeable, infinite, self-existing, unconditioned nature of Almighty God, from whom all created things proceeded,—to whom they are all to be referred,—by whom they are all to be judged; whose perfections of goodness are the law of His will, and His will the wielder of all power, and His power the Lord of all things. What seems right to Him is right, absolutely and eternally; what seems good is good; what seems evil is evil. It is all *true;* that is, it accords with his law, and it can never be changed. And to know this truth is to know God —to know his commands, his promises, his threatenings,—what he loves, what he hates, what he proposes to do, what he has done.

But truth also means accordance with the *fancies* of *individual men.* Each man carries within him certain, as he imagines, standard principles. He forms a theory, or rather nature forms one for him, as soon as he opens his eyes; he takes it untried and unqualified upon a single experience. Does the fire burn him to day? Instantly, by the process of association, which he does not make himself, he is prepared the next time he sees fire to anticipate burning. As a horse frightened at a particular spot, the next time he passes by it he starts again. Is a man amiable in one point? we believe him an angel in all. Is he unkind or vicious? he is called a demon. And of these hasty generalisations, whether or not they have been subjected, as God intended they should be, to subsequent experiment, we make the

rule of our belief. All facts we try by them; what agrees with them, we pronounce true; what disagrees, we say is false. And as we cannot help perceiving the agreement or disagreement when the two things—that is, our own general principle and the particular fact—are brought together; or, in the logical language, as the conclusion follows necessarily when the premises are assumed,—hence men have been found to argue that our opinions are no more in our power, no more subject to moral responsibility or righteous punishment, than our sensations of heat when fire is near, or the perception that white is not black, if both colours are brought before the eye. And our opinions in this sense are not in our own power. We cannot help perceiving similarity between things similar, and discrepancy between things discrepant. And if we believe our principles to be true, we cannot help believing all things contained in them to be true likewise; and all things which contradict them to be false. But there are three things which we can help; and it is for the neglect of these that we are morally culpable, and shall be morally punished.

We can help trusting implicitly to those hasty generalisations which we make from partial careless experiences, and which nature herself compels us to distrust, by compelling us to modify or abridge them every moment. Look at any science—the science of geology, for instance; see how it began, like every other human science, with a general theory rapidly evolved from some narrow observation. A most distinguished geologist was once laying down his theory of the science to a hearer who, unhappily, had a good memory.—"The earth is formed in this way." "Sir, you did not think so in 1821," was the suggestion. "The sea originally lay here." "This was not your theory in 1824," was the hint. "Animals

were created in this order." "I think you mentioned another in a work of 1830." "Coal is a deposit from such and such causes." "Yes; but you said otherwise in 1834." And scarcely a principle was laid down which had not been differently expressed at some former period. And no blame was to be attached to the person who thus held different views at different times. For we *must* form theories of general principles, even on a single experience, as soon as we begin to think; and we must vary and qualify them subsequently by further experiment. But if, without such experiments, we will hold them positively, and lay them down dogmatically, and declare every thing false which does not coincide with them, then we are morally guilty, and we shall morally be punished. It is at least imprudence; more than this, it is arrogance and folly.

But add another consideration. Let us thus bigotedly adhere to our own crude generalisations, in the face of, and in direct opposition to, other general principles, put before us by parents, by friends, by the State, by antiquity, by learning, by goodness, by piety, in books, and buildings, and solemn rites, and vast institutions, and methodised systems—principles covered, as Plato says, with the hoar of 1800 years,—let them be uttered in a voice of serious, affectionate warning, at stated times, by appointed persons, when our heart is yet tender, and our ears unstupified by the din of the world,—let the truth stand before us in the form of an old and venerable prophet, παλαίφατος ἐν ξυροτοῖς γέρων λόγος,*—and then let us cast it off in contempt, and follow the thought of our own heart;—and beside the intellectual folly, there is added the clear moral guilt of irreverence, ingratitude, insensibility to shame, of

* Æschyl. Agam. 727.

stubbornness, and disobedience, not only to man, but to God, by whom human authority was placed over us.

Or take two other points of view in which error is obviously criminal. A man holds a general principle—for instance, the duty of benevolence—holds it perhaps rightly on authority; and there comes another principle, the principle of severe justice, which hastily he rejects as incompatible with the former, and pronounces it to be false. Now is he sure that it is incompatible? It seems contradictory. Is it really contradictory? Has he tried to hold them both; to act upon them both, as mutual checks upon each other? Is he willing to carry out his principle of faith so far as to trust legitimate authority, when it puts before him gravely and obviously things which to him seem inconsistencies? Or, will he trust it only when it tells him what he can understand; that is, will he trust himself, and himself only? Remember (and you cannot receive a more important axiom of reason,) that nearly all—we might say all (for where are the exceptions?)—that nearly all true systems rest upon at least two principles—and these two seemingly opposed to each other—not upon one. The moment a writer or a teacher professes to reduce every thing to one principle, be assured he is on the point of leading you astray. He cannot understand the human mind, which is constructed on opposite tendencies; nor the plans which only can harmonise them. And the moment you detect in a system, bearing on it in other respects a trustworthy character, an appearance of inconsistencies, held, nevertheless, decidedly, and put forward prominently, the presumption is in favour of its truth. Let the axiom be suggested now. It will be for us, in another place, to illustrate it with more particular reference to the history

of ethics. This, then—this refusal to try the possibility of practically holding together declarations not necessarily repugnant, but both supported by authority, is another moral fault. It is the cause of nearly all ethical errors, of all heresies and schisms; and for it, and for its consequences, we are morally responsible.

Once more: our error may arise from a sin of carelessness. Our general principles may be right; but we may reject a particular fact, or state wrongly our minor premiss, from not having accurately examined it. We may believe in the conjoined virtue of justice and benevolence, and a particular action may be produced which seems to violate the law, and which, therefore, we pronounce wrong. Are we sure that we understand the action? Have we collected all its circumstances, investigated all its details? You see a man cutting off another's head; you pronounce it murder, and you are filled with indignation. You see another putting his hand into his neighbour's pocket and pulling out a purse; you call it stealing; you rightly abominate stealing, and you summon the police. But the man who is cutting off the head may be an executioner, and the man who is pulling out the purse may be a policeman himself examining the pocket of a thief. Until you have thoroughly traced out all the circumstances of the fact, you have no right to bring it under your general principle. Neglecting to do this is carelessness; and carelessness, by the first laws of morals, is a punishable offence.

Why have I gone into this question? Because I wish to point out to you the many chances there are of error, if you will persist in walking by "the sight of your own eyes," and "trusting to your own understanding;" the almost certainty that you will fall into them; the *absolute certainty* that, if you

fall, you will also be punished, and deserve to be punished. Will you, then, attempt to take the first course suggested to you, when you stand before the phenomena of morals, and will you strike out a system for yourself? You have before you a multitude of moral facts. Externally, you have the records of history; the lives of nations and individuals; observations of the manners, actions, tastes, studies, trades, and professions of men; their amusements; their works of art and fiction; their maxims; their laws. All of these may teach us what the mind of man is, and longs to be, because from the mind of man they originally flow: the tree may be known by its fruits. Internally, again, you have the facts of your own consciousness and your own acts, to interpret the acts of other. You have feelings, and desires, and laws of reasoning. Now will you collect all these—(it is a plan very often suggested; and by the Scotch school of metaphysics it was laid down as the basis of the study, and followed out, till they had stripped moral science of almost every line and feature which denoted a heavenly origin)—will you try to collect all these, and set to work to frame a science for yourself, on the principle of the Baconian induction, or rather, what ignorant men will call the Baconian induction,—the principle of deducing general laws from the contemplation of particular experiments? Let us try the plan in some other science. You wish to teach a child chemistry, the general laws of chemistry. You wish to inspire him with an ardent desire for truth, that he may be an *independent original thinker*, not bound down slavishly and cowardly to the yoke of authority; *nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri.* Now, then, construct for him a laboratory; provide retorts, furnaces, acids, and alkalis; a little oil of vitriol here, a quantity of sulphur there; hydrogen

gas in this bottle, oxygen gas in that; here some prussic acid, there a plate of arsenic. Add a barrel or two of gunpowder, and plenty of brimstone matches. All, remember, admirable things, perfectly safe, and infinitely useful, when rightly put together and judiciously employed; just as the laws of our appetites and desires are admirably good, when properly balanced against each other; prudence against benevolence, obedience against freedom, self-discipline against asceticism, humility against elevation of mind;—but all alike full of poison, and liable to explosions, which rend not only the experimenter but society, if an ignorant hand meddles with them wrongly. Put down in the midst of them the little original independent thinker, and leave him to himself; or, rather, let me beg of you to remain with him in the house, and only abstain from interfering with his proceedings, lest you mar his originality of thought.

Let us take a less formidable instance, where not the poisoning of a child, or the blowing up of a town, but only stupefaction, may ensue. You would teach a child astronomy; a child, remember, because we must preserve the analogy,—and ethics must be taught to children, to mere babies, or they cannot be made good; (and as far as goodness is concerned, who are not babies?) and taught they are as much by the scolding of a nurse, or the holding up of a parent's finger, as in after-life by the laws and the gallows. Now, then, apply the principle of making him study facts for himself. There is the sun; here is the earth; there are the stars. Take him up to the top of the house, and bid him look. There are his facts; he has nothing to do but to collect and arrange them.

Dear little original independent thinker! once more. Let us put you in the way of acquiring a

knowledge of geology. There is a gravel-pit at the back of the house; a chalk-pit on one side; a river with good steep banks within a mile; and coal-pits in abundance on all sides. Every morning a dumb nurse—dumb, for if she talks, you will be guided by her authority, and lose your liberty of judgment—shall take you out to these, put you down—for if she guides you to this place or that, she will bias your mind—and you shall run about by yourself, and collect your geological observations.

Once more: you are grown up into a boy; you are at school, and you must learn Greek; not by lexicons and grammars: forbid it, genius of liberty and of original thinking! Lexicons and grammars are human systems; they are the opinions of frail men like yourself. They would fill you with prejudices, bias you with untried dogmas. No! there are Homer, and Demosthenes, and Æschylus, and Aristophanes; here you will find all the parts of language, prepositions and participles, nouns and genders, set before you; you have only to observe, classify them, trace out their general principles, reduce them into a system of your own, *nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri.* "But give me a tutor," you will say. A tutor! why should you want a tutor? "To tell me the meaning of these strange hieroglyphics." What! are the very first rudiments so hard? cannot you even begin without some information from without? A tutor is a mere human being like yourself. His opinion is not half as good as that of lexicons and grammars, of which many tutors have approved already. He will fill you with prejudices, destroy your originality. You can have no tutor, unless I abandon my principle of leaving you to work out truth by yourself.

One of the most characteristic features in this rationalistic folly, is the notion of what in France is

called Progress. If you will set aside all authority that has gone before you, it must be because you disdain it; disdaining, you must hope for something better. And thus rationalists of all kinds are constantly looking forward to a millennium, in which their own new theory shall have overturned all errors, and established the reign of truth and happiness in the world. Now, whoever comes to you with this vision of a millennium, to be brought about in any other way than that shadowed out in prophecy, namely, by the sudden appearance of our Lord in the last age of a thoroughly depraved and exhausted generation, is to be suspected. *Fœnum habet in cornu.* Be assured no great discoveries are to be made in the science of Ethics. Human nature has been working before us under the influence of Christianity for the last eighteen hundred years, and we have a very full detail of its proceedings. It was working without Christianity for two thousand years before, also under the observation of man. And if there is one fact more generally admitted than another, it is the uniformity of its operations. We have seen the whole of it from the first. New minerals may be discovered, and new gases; unknown anomalies in vegetables, and monsters in zoology; forms of stratification be uncovered, to overturn theory after theory; and star after star be brought out in the heavens, to swell the catalogue of astronomy: but no such elasticity of expansion is visible in the science of human nature. Its facts have been explored long since; its pomœrium fixed. Its greatest novelties have only been the exhumation of forgotten theories; and its strangest phenomena are produced not by the addition, but by the loss of some ordinary element; as a mutilated animal may seem a prodigy to an ignorant

anatomist. Little, therefore, is left for rationalism to accomplish.

But those who are thus looking forward are unwilling to look back; and when they do, it is with a sneer of compassion, as if all behind them was darkness, while all before is light. Watch, therefore, this feature also in rationalism.

There is an atheistic philosophy, as opposed to our experience as it is irreconcilable with possibility, which would trace back all human knowledge to a state of entire ignorance, just as it would frame a world from the expansion of a point. Art and language, and science and society, as well as morals and religion, are thus supposed to have been collected by *experience*, and *experience* alone. It forgets that without art preceding experience, life could not have been preserved to gain any experience whatever; that without language no language could be framed; that without some general principles of reason, which make the foundation of science, science could never have arisen; that instead of the individual preceding and forming society, society must have preceded and formed the individual, or the child could never have lived to become a man; that moral laws could not have been laid down except by virtuous men, and men do not become virtuous without a moral law to guide them before they are good themselves; and that religion could not have been wrought out by the discoveries of physical science and natural reason—that it could not, in a word, have sprung from what is called natural theology, because neither science nor reason could be developed except in an advanced stage of society; and society itself could not be held together without the bond of an antecedent religion. Christianity tells a different tale. It declares that

in art and language, and science and society, as well as in morals and religion, some portion of knowledge, some sketch and outline of truth, sufficient to guide man at the first, however imperfectly developed, was given him at the beginning from a source external to himself, from revelation; that he was not left to elicit light out of entire darkness; to accumulate knowledge without any capital to commence with; to grow without roots; to walk without the power of motion; to climb from the very bottom of the hill without any aid or direction. Something was given him from the first, that he might afterwards gain more for himself. The seed containing the tree was planted in him, and the tree was to be afterwards thrown out. He was placed half-way up the ascent, and from thence was to struggle to the top. Whoever does not look back with reverence to the past, has no right to look forward with hope for the future; and a wise man, who really understands the history of man, will regard the progress of society, both intellectually and civilly, as a decline rather than an advance.

Lastly, the rationalist makes no distinction between the reason of the child and of the man. He confounds human reason in the abstract with the reason of the individual; he thinks it perfect alike in every one. He assigns to it, therefore, the right to judge of truth in all things, and at all times, and, struggle as he may to escape, he must be compelled either to allow that the child is born with as much power of discernment as the adult, or to fix, as Locke tries to do, some period when these powers are developed—say at the age of twenty-one. He must either treat an infant as a sage, or declare that at some fixed period his mind suddenly expands, and he is released from all his obligations to listen to men wiser than himself—this is the dilemma of rationalism.

Great God! what is to become of an age and a nation in which these follies are held; not only held, but laid down as the very foundations of education? And men are taught not to listen to the voice of the wise, speaking to them the words of God; and those are scoffed and mocked at who prophesy the end; when truth shall be torn in fragments, and men's minds be shaken from their foundation; and knowledge will be sealed up; and the power of vision will depart; and the fear of God will perish, and his wisdom be distrusted; and they whom we have taught to think scorn of the wise and the old, with the words of God in their mouth, lest they should fall under the dominion of men, will do the only thing that remains, and rather than have none to guide them, will fall down and worship fools.

"Stay yourselves," says the prophet, speaking of these latter times,[1] "stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this

[1] Isaiah xxix. 9-15.

people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel"—or, as the marginal reference would interpret it, "that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: that walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!"[1] "Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophesy not unto us right things; speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits: get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us."[2] "Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?"[3] He knew not, that is, what was in man; and we will go elsewhere to learn it.

[1] Is. xxx. 1, 2. It may assist the application, to remember, that Egypt was generally employed by early Christian Fathers as a type of "heathen learning" in its relation to theology.

[2] Ver. 10, 11. [3] Ch. xxix. 16.

CHAPTER VIII.

You cannot, therefore, in the study of Ethics, become an original thinker—God forbid!—or, in other words, a rationalist, such as the German philosophers would wish you to be, forming your own system by yourself, and trying every thing by it.

But you have another choice. You may become an Eclectic, as it is called; and to Eclecticism you will be kindly invited, if you go to France. What Eclecticism is, you may not know; but it is a thing easily learned, and easily practised. And it is a very well-contrived disguise, a sort of domino, for those who do not like to profess that they go wholly by themselves, and yet are resolved to go in no respect by others.

When, then, you are placed before the various systems of ethics, with their respective teachers at their head; instead of coolly dismissing them all as perfectly useless, you may greet them all most respectfully and affectionately; you may pass them in review before you, Christianity and all; admiring this, praising that, paying some compliment to each; regretting only, that no one system is so perfect but that it may be made more perfect by an addition from some other. You will, therefore, refuse to follow any one; but pick from each its peculiar excellence, ἐκλέγειν; cull out what pleases you; and make a perfect system of your own; as Apelles is falsely said to have painted his Venus; who, painted on any such principle, must have been not a Venus, but a monster. So modern architects propose to

build a perfect cathedral, by taking the spire of Salisbury, and the nave of Canterbury, and the choir of York, and the cloisters of Gloucester, and the front of Peterborough, and the tombs of Winchester, and to form them into—one monster. So a poet might plan a poem, to include the solemnity of Milton, and the humour of Shakspeare; the terse diction of Pope, and the rude Doric of Chaucer; epigrams from Martial, and lyrics from Pindar; and the elegant witticisms of the last new novel, side by side with the awfulness of the warnings in the Bible. This is Eclecticism.

And yet, you will ask, ought we not to aim at perfection? And is perfection to be found in any separate system? Is it not the result of combination—of a collection of parts? Where is the evil of eclecticism? That some evil principle is contained in it is evident; but what is it?

In the first place, then, Eclecticism implies that you, the individual thinker, place yourself out of and above all other teachers and doctrines, and look down on them as a judge and critic; and, therefore, proudly and contemptuously. To praise implies superiority. We never praise the gods, says Aristotle; we wonder at and revere them. And to praise, instead of obeying, an ethical system, implies that we have within us some standard by which we measure it—a standard of more value than the thing measured by it, as every rule is more perfect than the line which it tries. But where does this standard come from? If not taken from any other teacher, or body of teachers, it must come from ourselves, from our own notions and feelings. And hence Eclecticism is but another word for independence and Rationalism; and in acting on it, men cull out what they like, reject what they dislike, assent to that which seems right in their own eyes,

deny all that they cannot understand. Their own minds are their only rule. Give a man, indeed, one certain fixed body of doctrine, received from competent authority, bind him to one school, whatever it may be, and then he may become an eclectic of the rest without becoming a rationalist. And a Christian, in submitting to the Church, may stand before all other systems of ethics as an eclectic; but with safety and wisdom. He may select in them all that is good, finding this doctrine more perfect in one, and that doctrine in another, but regulating his approval not by his own private notions, but by the standard of the Church. And thus the early fathers called themselves eclectics, and boasted of the title. Justin Martyr,[1] St. Augustin,[2] St. Basil,[3] St. Jerome,[4] Origen,[5] Theodoret,[6] Clement of Alexandria,[7] Tertullian,[8] all recommend eclecticism in this sense, but with the strict reservation in the words of Origen himself, "that the preaching and doctrines of the Church, transmitted by the order of succession from the apostles, and continuing unaltered to this time in the Church, be maintained inviolate; that such only be deemed truth which in no respect is discordant with ecclesiastical and apostolical tradition."[9]

In Plato, in Aristotle, in the Stoics, in the Ori-

[1] Apolog. II. p. 132. Thirlby edit. Apolog. 1.
[2] De Civit. Dei, lib. viii. c. 9, 10.
[3] Homil. 24. De legendis libris Gentilium ad adolescentes.
[4] Epist. 70 ad Magnum.
[5] Epist ad Gregorium, περὶ ἀρχῶν, lib. i
[6] Curat. Græc. Aff., lib. i. [7] Stromat., lib. v.
[8] Testimon. Animæ, p. 8.
[9] Περὶ ἀρχῶν, lib. i. "Servetur vero ecclesiastica prædicatio per successionis ordinem ab apostolis tradita, et usque ad præsens in ecclesiis permanens; illa sola credenda est veritas, quæ in nullo ab ecclesiastica et apostolica discordat traditione."

ental sects, they distinguished what accorded with the truths of the Gospel; and standing as they did on the high ground of revelation, could look down on all human systems, praising this and censuring that, acting as their judges and critics, treating them as inferiors, and measuring them by a standard of their own. And yet there was no presumption or danger, since the standard which they used was not invented of themselves, but was the revelation of God.

One fault, then, of eclecticism is, that it refers every thing at last to the judgment of the individual thinker.

It has another,—that a system thus formed must always be full of inconsistencies. True it is that every work of nature consists of parts wrought into a whole. The body is made of limbs, the tree of branches and leaves, the human mind of many faculties and various capacities, the heavens of clusters of stars, society of families, families of groups of men, the Church of a distinction of orders. *Without many parts there is no whole.* But also nature has established one law for the formation of these wholes—a law which eclecticism sets at nought. How is the body formed? Not by bringing together legs, and arms, and heads, and rivetting them into one mass. It is developed from the embryo, in which all the outlines of the parts were originally included, and have only been drawn out and magnified by the growth of life. How is the tree produced? Is it by hammering together boughs and trunks, tacking on leaves here, sewing on flowers there? No, as botanists will tell you, the whole oak lies hid in the acorn, and is drawn out from that germ by light, and air, and the vitality which lies within it. So families spring from one first parent; so nations from some one head. Even where violence has

overturned and rooted up all original connexion with a patriarchal monarchical authority, yet society never can begin to organise itself again, unless some *one* man takes the lead; gathers round him followers who hang on him; by them collects more distant dependents; distributes his power through them; becomes to them as the acorn to the oak, as the embryo to the man. So the old British constitution was developed from the one germ of regal authority, not from independent conflicting prerogatives of people and king. So the holy Church, with all its multitudes of members, its generations upon generations, its various offices, its separate gifts, all sprung from one single Head. It was not an aggregate of individuals voluntarily combining together, as the Sophist Locke supposes.[1] It was gathered by the Spirit of God pervading human hearts, attracting to itself whatever was congenial, swelling its own bulk, and spreading itself out into form and beauty by a power within itself. So, too, the doctrine of the Church. It lay hid all of it in the words of our Saviour, as they are delivered in the Gospel. It was drawn out and expanded more by the apostles in their preaching. It took a still more precise and developed form during the first three centuries:[2] but it was not picked up in fragments, and nailed together, from the relics of heathen philosophy, after the fancy of an individual man. And the same may be said of its discipline and polity.

I dwell on this law of growth, not merely in illustration of the question before you, but because it is of vital importance in very many controversies of the present day, political, religious, and moral.

[1] Letters on Toleration.

[2] See an eloquent passage in Vincentius, Commonitorium adversus Hæreses.

And it never can be overlooked without fatal errors in reasoning, and still worse errors in practice.

And Eclecticism does overlook it. And if it produces anything, it must produce a monster, with the neck of the horse supporting the head of a man, and the body of a woman ending in the tail of a fish.[1]

Give a comparative anatomist (I am alluding to a fact) the claw of an unknown animal, and he will, and has been able to describe the whole skeleton before it has been seen. Shew an architect the moulding of a good Gothic building, and he can trace out its general plan. Put the fragment of a Grecian statue before a master sculptor, and he will tell you, by the position of a muscle, the attitude and intention of the whole figure. Why? Because in every high and perfect work of art or nature there is one leading design, which flows into and animates each part. The most distant limbs are held together by some secret sympathy; portions, between which a common eye cannot detect the slightest connexion, yet in some way are dependent on each other, because they are segments of a common plan, and spring from one fundamental idea. Why have all mammiferous animals seven vertebræ in the neck, and no more? Why have ruminating animals cloven feet? No one can tell; and yet these parts are in some way so connected together, that they have never yet been found separated.

But an eclectic, if he is to be really and truly an eclectic, can have no *one* common idea under which to arrange the fragments, which he pilfers from a variety of systems. If he has such a common fundamental idea, then that idea is his own system, and he is a rationalist, not an eclectic. If he has none, then, according to the fancy of the

[1] Horat. Ars Poetic.

moment, he will now take up one doctrine, now another, pick a little bit here, a little bit there—his taste varying with the hour; mixing up not merely seeming opposites, which, after all, may be compatible with each other, but really incoherent principles; inculcating in one page a general rule, in another an act which violates it; making, in one word, a monster.

And before I pass from this point, let us think if this law of unity in the formation of a system—a law which cannot be violated without violating common sense—does not also prove the necessity of being guided in our choice by Revelation, and therefore still further pronounce against eclecticism. That we must be so guided is clear, from a plain moral duty, whether we understand its value or not. God has placed teachers over us; and if we refuse to listen to them, we are disobeying God. But when the duty is allowed, we may also delight in tracing how good and how useful is the act which it prescribes.

Do you remember a very different principle, which was laid down before, that no true system ever was made to rest upon any *one* principle—*that it must be built at least upon two;* that human nature was made up of opposite tendencies; and that therefore the laws by which it is to be governed must be opposite also? When a man has to walk upon a rope, with an inclination now to this side, now to that, his centre of gravity shifting every moment, it would be no good rule to give him only one contrary movement. He must have two. When he is falling to the left, he must be directed to throw himself to the right; when he is falling to the right, he must throw himself back to the left. And thus he will keep himself in the middle; not by one law or impulse, but by two contrary to each other.

And so it is with our moral nature; made up, as it is, of reason and passion, spirit and flesh, God and man.

What, then, you will ask, must every true system be based on two principles? And yet, as was said before, can no system be consistent or good, which does not flow from one? Here is another paradox? How are we to explain the contradiction? I answer, that both facts being true, both are to be held together, on the very principles which they assert. And there is one way, and one way only, in which here this great problem can be solved—the problem which meets us at every step, when penetrating into the mysteries of nature—of reconciling plurality with unity. *No unity without plurality; no plurality without unity.* As here enunciated generally, the axiom may be unintelligible. But bear it in mind, apply it as you study, and you will soon comprehend it. Give you *one* teacher, and *one* only, in whom you have implicit confidence, and receive from him upon faith all that he tells you; and here you have what you want—unity of source, for the system which you hold. Let that system contain the *opposite laws*, and *counteracting* influences required by your moral nature; and here you have the *plurality* of axioms, or principles. And that it is possible in this way, but in no other, to hold an ethical system adequate to the wants of our nature, is evident from facts. Here is a gardener giving directions to a workman, who knows nothing of the growth of plants: "Take this seed; I wish to have a creeper twining round this building. Fasten some wires on the wall to support it, for it will be thus high. Now put the seed down into the ground." "What!" the labourer might say, "bury the seed, when the plant is to be up there—put it down, in order to make it grow up?" But he

would say no such thing. He might comprehend nothing of the mode in which these two opposite statements could be reconciled by reason, but he would reconcile them — give them unity by faith. He would take the word of his master, fix the wires, and sow the seed; and the plant would grow. Take the instance of an army. The enemy is to be defeated. One column is ordered to move forward, another to move back. What, two contrary movements? Ought not the soldiers to refuse until they are reconciled? They do not comprehend them; they think them paradoxical. Will they move? Yes, undoubtedly. Why? Because they have faith in their commander. They act through his understanding; are satisfied that he should comprehend, without comprehending themselves; or, as Plato[1] says, "are willing to be wise by his wisdom." But for this purpose there must be *one* commander, and one only. They must have unity in *one* point, in order to hold *plurality* in others. Let them have separate orders from separate men, and the ranks will fall to pieces.

Faith, therefore, or entire confidence, in some *one* person, is a mode by which we can hold together those seemingly contrary principles which are necessary to every perfect system of ethics. To guide a horse there must be two reins; but those two must be held by one hand. To walk, we must have two legs; but both must be under the control of one body. To act as a society, there must be many distinct individuals; but they must act not each against the other, as if one principle of morals might presume to domineer over and extirpate the rest, but all in their several places, and all in subjection to some one governor, who holds the plan of the whole.

[1] Republic.

But without faith in some one teacher, who guarantees the separate truth of these seeming contrarieties, they cannot be held at all; and for the following reason:—If we do not receive our doctrines from others, we must reason them out for ourselves. Now the *essential, primary, never-varying law of human reason, is unity.* Take the axiom as it stands, however obscure it may sound, and apply it to facts. This is the mode of arriving at all knowledge. A chemist tells you that he puts a piece of metal into a vessel of water, and the metal caught fire. Your reason is revolted. You do not understand it. Why? Because there is a discrepancy, a want of resemblance or *unity* between this fact, and your general notion that water extinguishes fire, instead of kindling it. How will the chemist bring your reason to receive the mystery? He will shew you that certain gases in the water have a certain affinity for certain elements in the metal—a fact which you may see in other experiments; that in disengaging themselves they evolve heat—a fact which may also be shewn. And thus the phenomenon of a metal burning in water will be reduced under your former knowledge; it will become but one instance of a general law, which you knew before, and you will not *doubt*[1] it, or feel otherwise than at *one* with it. A man, of whom you thought well, is charged with an offence. You disbelieve it. Why? Because the act is inconsistent—is not at unity with his previous character. Shew that he had frequently done the same thing before, and you immediately cease to wonder. A botanist takes up a flower. Why is he perplexed and puzzled? Here are certain pistils connected with certain stamina—such leaves, such a stalk. He stands over it, knits his brows, pulls it to pieces, examines it dubiously,

[1] Remember the etymology of doubt, *dubius, duo*, "two."

is uncomfortable, not satisfied in his reason; till what?—till he can tell you under what known class it may be ranged; that it agrees with, is *one* of a number of plants which already he knows to possess this common type. A rationalist takes up the Bible. He assumes that Almighty God is a being who wishes nothing but the enjoyment of his creatures, without any reference to their goodness; and he finds Him described as commanding acts which seem harsh and destructive. These facts are not in harmony, in *unity* with his pre-conceived opinion, and he rejects them; and a Christian, on the same principle, rejects the objection of the rationalist, because he finds facts in the Bible which militate against and contradict it. Take, again, the reason of the artist. Put a number of colours into the hand of a child, and he brushes them about his paper, black against white, red in yellow, purple in brown; and you call him a silly child. Give the same colours to a painter, he arranges them on a plan, in order that no harsh contrasts may occur; that all may be harmonised together. He gives them *unity;* and you admire his reason. Scatter a number of pillars confusedly on the ground, you call them a ruin. Range them in *one* line, with *one* interval between each, *one* height to all, *one* form comprehending all, *one* line binding together the separate portions —and you create a Parthenon. Pick all the parts of a watch from each other, and they may seem to have been made by chance. Put them together, so as to obey one movement, tend to one end; and a philosopher takes it at once as an evidence of the existence of reason. And these instances may be sufficient to give you some notion of the axiom, that *unity is the law of reason;* that the greatest object and aim of the mere intellect of man is to reduce every thing to one—under one law, one

system; to give order to disorder; to trace one plan in a variety of scattered acts; to draw out an infinity of conclusions from the womb of one principle. And this being the action, and necessary action of human reason, it is evident that mere reason by itself never will frame a system built on *more than one* principle. And yet from *one* principle no perfect theory can be generated; any more than a seed will grow without earth also in which to deposit it; or children spring from one parent only; or vision be produced by the eye without light; or man live by the vitality within, without food from without to nourish him; or good moral habits be formed by acting in only one direction; or geometrical conclusions be deduced from definitions without axioms; or men teach well without books, or books without men; or states be well governed either by kings without a Church, or by a Church without kings. All process and creation in nature is by the help of at least two principles. The reason of man by itself cannot work with two principles. The reason of man, therefore, cannot generate a perfectly true system. And if a perfectly true system is to be acquired, it must be received from that perfect reason which can comprehend all things. It must be received upon faith—from one authority, one God; and we must act upon the different laws which He lays before us, whether by an act of understanding we can bring them into agreement or not.

Such then are the inherent defects of an eclectic system. Therefore never profess to be an eclectic; or trust to any who, like the French writers, Cousin, Guizot, and others, make a boast of reviving eclecticism in the present age.* It is a vain, presump-

* See Cousin's Cours de Philosophie.

tuous, empty scheme; which cannot be seriously formed without implying the abrogation of any authoritative revelation; which places Christianity on a level with human theories; which affects to be wiser than any men who have gone before; which is too conceited really to submit to others, and at the same time too cowardly to declare its entire dependence on itself: and the result of which must be, either a poor shallow speculation, wrought out from the brain of an individual who does not understand the first laws of human nature; or a monster like the stuffed elephant on the stage, with a man in each leg, and each man with a separate will of his own; and the moment it begins to move, it will come to the ground.

CHAPTER IX.

ECLECTICISM, therefore, or the French philosophy of the day, being abandoned, together with the German principle of original thinking, is there no other form in which you may study the science of Ethics, with mischief to yourself, and damage to the cause of truth? One other still remains. You may become a Syncretist. Here is another hard word; but the meaning of it is worth attending to; for the age in general is becoming a syncretist, and in particular the legislation of this country is now conducted on the syncretistic principle. *Syncretism, then, is a mixing together of things which ought to be kept distinct.* Not, like eclecticism, putting them together in separate portions, as layers of oil and water; or as men may make a mermaid by sewing on the tail of a herring to the head of a monkey, without at all implying that a mermaid and a monkey are the same thing; but destroying all lines of separation, declaring that they are all one and the same. This principle of confusion Almighty God seems to have denounced throughout with a peculiar malediction:—"Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled. Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together. Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together."[1] And again: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath

[1] Deut. xxii. 9.

righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye *separate*, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."[1] Once more: "And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them [the people of Canaan] before thee, thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a *special* people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth."[2] When the Philistines brought the ark of God into the temple of Dagon, it was on the principle of syncretism. When the followers of Baal halted between two opinions, it was on the principle of syncretism. When Solomon built his altars to Ashtaroth, it was on the principle of syncretism. When the government of this country would establish common schools, without distinction of religious opinions, it is on the principle

[1] Cor. vi. 14. [2] Deut. vii. 2.

of syncretism; or, in the words of Scripture, "confusion," which is abomination to the Lord.

To prevent our supposing that this abomination consisted merely in the results, God, it might seem, especially prohibited it even in insignificant acts, as sowing seed and wearing a garment. Let us see what there is in it intrinsically ahhorrent to right and truth, and to the moral nature of Him who is the law of right and truth: first having fixed precisely the process which the syncretist pursues, and his motives for pursuing it.

The object, then, of the syncretist may be one of two. In one case he may be anxious to find as large an amount of authority as possible for his own chosen code of opinions; to trace them, therefore, every where, in every system. This was the Syncretism of the Neo-platonic school of Alexandria. Aristotle, Plato, the Stoics, all alike, they compelled to pay tribute and homage to their own doctrines. It is the most innocent form of syncretism, and to a certain extent will succeed; because all systems that have sprung from the same human nature, or have been adapted to it, cannot vary universally in fundamental points. Their differences will be rather of omission than of contradiction.

In the other case, the motive of the syncretist is a dislike to ethical and theological polemics. Like Gallio, "he careth for none of these things." He looks down with contempt on combatants, who seem contending sometimes for mere words, sometimes for unpractical abstractions; not unfrequently with violence, always with a certain pertinacity offensive to weak, and wearying to indolent minds. He summons the combatants before him; rebukes them for their uncharitable quarrels; assures them they are all in the right—that they all mean one and the same thing, though without knowing it.

The combatants stare, as well they may; but the syncretist persists in his assertion. How will he prove it? The modes of doing this are also two. One is, the obvious process of misinterpretation — turning, explaining, eliding, inserting, combining, or interpolating what is written, so as to make a writer say the very thing which he did not say. This is the favourite process at present in Germany. It was carried also to a great extent under the syncretistic system of Alexandrian Platonism. And heretics, as Clement observes,[1] knew how to wrest the Scriptures to their meaning, even by their tone of voice when reading, or by altering the quantity, accents, or punctuation. But in England our powers of criticism are not yet equal to this task; and we have, therefore, adopted another mode. We take those doctrines in which all do agree, and strike off all the rest *as unimportant;* chalking off from each body of opinion a certain extent, beyond which no shots are to count. Now, all systems must have some points of agreement. Some will have many. The points, indeed, must diminish in number with the increase of systems brought under review, and at last they will almost vanish. But at first this will not be perceptible. The religious syncretism of this day began with confounding Episcopacy and presbyterianism. It was not obliged to leave out more than a seeming matter of discipline. Then came other sects calling themselves Christian, and the Christianity which it held dwindled away in its amount. Now have come still more, not calling themselves Christian; and the religion of the syncretist has also ceased to be Christian. It leaves out what they leave out. It has become a "rational religion." The next sect will

[1] Stromat. iii. p. 529.

leave out *rational*, and the next, *religion*; and then the residuum will be nothing.

But sooner or later, to this it must come. And so it must be in purely scientific ethics. If a general about to march an army, lays it down as a first principle, that he will march only so far as *all* the soldiers will march with him, let there be only one individual too indolent, or too cowardly, to march at all, and the whole movement is stopped. He is in the power of this man, the worst and lowest of the body. And so the syncretist is at the mercy of the most ignorant and brutalised theory among all those which man can conceive; and the moment such a theory has risen up, rejecting the few grand truths which the better class, though in some error, had before retained, he must, to preserve his consistency, give up to it, and pare down his creed to its measure of opinion, whatever it may be. Be assured this is the inevitable result. The syncretist government-schools on the new plan were founded to teach a doctrine common to all sects, meaning all Christian sects, and none others. But the children of socialists have been admitted into some; and as the socialists reject the Bible, the schoolmaster has been obliged to omit it.[1] All religion is gone. This, then, is one fatal mischief in such a principle.

But the syncretist, you say, will stop short. He will draw a line beyond which he will not pass. Stop short? What, establish exclusions and distinctions? exclusions and distinctions in a system professedly of no exclusion? How can this be allowed? And if it be allowed, where will the line be drawn? Where the syncretist himself chooses? Then *he is* really the framer of the scheme, the authority for the doctrine. He is not a syncretist, but an independent original thinker—the founder

[1] See Times Newspaper, March 6, 1840.

of a new school; and moreover an eclectic, culling out from other sects the doctrines which happen to suit his own fancy. He, the secretary of state, if the matter be a government-question, will take upon himself the office of the Catholic Church; that office which he protests against when exercised by the Catholic Church—protests against as usurpation, illiberality, subtle speculation, scholastic theology, metaphysical dogmatism;—he, the secretary of state, will take the chair of a General Council, and say what doctrines form part of revelation, and what are inventions of man; what God has commanded to be taught, and what He will suffer to be omitted! He will dare to frame a creed, and impose it upon the nation. It cannot be otherwise.

But, you say, he will take the doctrines of the majority. And as probably the majority at first will be on the side of truth, retaining doctrines handed down to them by an anterior system, before syncretism began its work, there will be a hope that this criterion will answer to exclude the more obviously pernicious fancies. So men think now in religion. Because the greater number in this country, however they differ in other points, happen to be agreed that Christianity is a revelation, that the Bible is inspired, that moral duties are a part of its laws, that religion is necessary to man,—they think that they can draw a line which shall cut off anti-Christian from Christian sects, deism from a vague generalised Gospel-scheme, blasphemy from religious dissent. But let them be assured, no system founded on the general testimony of man ever maintained its ground, any more than a house built upon a quicksand. In Germany this ground is gone already. *The greater number are always ignorant and bad;* requiring to be led, not intended to lead. It is the test of a sound philosophy to believe this. When a nation, indeed, has

for years been under the influence of a vast organised society, holding up a permanent creed of truth before their eyes, and by an established machinery propelling its own better spirit into every vein and artery of the body politic, that body will retain those truths for a very long time; even when the power of the society is diminished, and its machinery is become enfeebled or disordered. So it is with the maintenance of truth in this land at this moment. But when, instead of restoring this machinery, it is to be entirely destroyed, and the body is to be left wholly to itself, then human nature will find its vent, and take its course; and all follies, and with follies all crimes, will spring out unresisted; "when," as the historian describes,[1] "the whole system of life shall be thrown into confusion; and man's nature having made itself master of its laws—that nature, so prone to sin even when opposed by laws—will delight to shew itself the slave of its passions, the overruler of all right, the bitter enemy of all that is better and wiser than itself:" *ξυνταραχθέντος τε τοῦ βίου ἐς τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον τῇ πόλει, καὶ τῶν νόμων κρατήσασα ἡ ἀνθρωπεία φύσις, εἰωθυῖα καὶ παρὰ τοὺς νόμους ἀδικεῖν, ἀσμένη ἐδήλωσεν ἀκρατὴς μὲν ὀργῆς οὖσα, κρείσσων δὲ τοῦ δικαίου, πολεμία δὲ τοῦ προὔχοντος.* Once set aside positive external law—whether a law of truth, or a law over the will, or a law of action—promulgated and enforced by a definite body of men, and in defiance of the opinion of the majority, and the real spirit of that majority will soon shew itself. So the French revolution began with sticking bunches of artificial flowers into the touch-holes of their cannons to welcome their captured monarch, and ended in butchering him on the guillotine. So the bad Greek philosophy commenced with Aristotle, and ended with Pyrrho and the so-

[1] Thucyd. lib. iii. 84.

phists. So the German reformers, take the first step with Luther and Calvin, and the last with Hegel and Strauss. And so our own English moralists first erected Locke — the Christian Locke — into an idol, and now they will be ready to follow Mr. Owen.

The opinion of a majority, then, is no guarantee against the ultimate degradation of syncretism. It oversteps the edge of the precipice, and it must go to the bottom. It has no inherent power to stop itself, without destroying its own nature. It may endeavour to catch hold of a bush, but the bush will give way.

And do not suppose, you — I mean the young reader, — who as yet know little of the abstruser distinctions of philosophy, that what I am now saying on the subject of syncretism, strange as the word may sound, has no practical reference to yourself. You cannot take up a newspaper without finding the principle avowed, that man ought not to make over-nice distinctions between sects and parties. You will scarcely find any situation in life, divided as men now are into sects and parties, where you will not be called on to say, whether you are a syncretist or not. Even in studying Ethics as a science, you require to be guarded against it. For instance, when you enter on the study of the Greek schools, of Aristotle especially, with the spirit and doctrines of Christianity hanging over you, you will be tempted, in a degree of which you will scarcely be sensible, to syncretise; to interpret heathenism by Christianity; to see goodness where no goodness was meant; and to trace similarities, which have little foundation but in your own fancy and wish to find them. It was thus that Christians of old thought that they could discover in Plato, not only many wonderful coincidences with the revealed word,

which undoubtedly they could find, but a mysterious conformity, which almost exalted the heathen philosopher to a level with revelation. The same process, to a still greater extent, had been carried on by the Alexandrian Platonists. Not only in Plato, but in Aristotle, and nearly all the Grecian schools; in the traditions of the East; in the poetry of Homer; in the gross polytheism of the popular worship,—they endeavoured, by the help of allegory and criticism, to read their own fundamental doctrines;—just as an enthusiastic antiquary persists in reading on a defaced milestone the name of some favourite Roman emperor. At a still later period, in the middle ages, Aristotle was used in the same manner by the schoolmen, who endeavoured to make him utter sentiments most foreign to his nature; and truths, of which he had few or no glimpses, that they might obtain a license for speculating freely in his scientific ethics, as if they were a counterpart of their own authoritative Christianity. The same thing was revived by the Platonists of the fifteenth century.

And you also must study heathen ethical writers. You much approach them, if you would study them properly, with reverence; with an expectation of finding in them deep truths, and mighty attestations to your own Christian creed. And that creed you must carry with you as a light into their dark recesses; or rather as a rule and standard by which to try and prove whatever you find in them. And you must feel delighted at every discovery of conformity. You must search for such conformities. You must be constantly comparing, illustrating the two systems one by the other. If you omit any one of these rules, you will not study rightly or successfully. And now let me ask, if you will not be under the temptation and risk of syncretising; that is, of

confounding the things compared, tracing more resemblances than really exist, and thus obliterating the distinctions between them?

And what will be the consequence? What have been the consequences of this principle before? It first raised the system of Plato to a level with Christianity; and then men were easily found to transfer their allegiance from the Apostles to the philosopher. It gave to the low vulgar sensuality of heathen idolatry a deep mystical import; shed on it, in fact, all the brilliancy and purity of that high philosophy, which persisted in finding there its own hidden truths, though in symbols and enigmas; and thus to the Alexandrian Platonism we owe the revival of paganism under the Emperor Julian. It afterwards raised up a most formidable materialistic and atheistic spirit against the Church under the form of Peripateticism. A similar anti-christian philosophy developed itself in the Florentine school. To the same desire of conciliating opposing theories, we may attribute much of the fatal poison of the German school. We have been saved from it hitherto in this country solely by the want of any deep philosophy; and by having kept the provinces of Christianity and Ethics so distinct, that we have at last been brought to suppose that Christianity is only a series of abstract theological metaphysics, and Ethics only a codification of the laws between man and man. But *if once a deep philosophy springs up in this country, as it is beginning to spring;* if you do, what to become a good moralist you must do, study Christianity and Ethics side by side; then, indeed, you will run the same risk of so deifying human morality, by unconsciously tracing in it the lineaments of a higher system, that it will finally rise up as a rival, and you will be unable to force it down again into the position of a

servant and handmaid. God has set two witnesses in the world of morals, as in the world of matter; the one to rule the day, the other to rule the night. Let us not think that we can learn the nature of the one, without making observations on the other. But let us guard against so gazing on the moon with dazzled and blinded eyes, that we transfer to it the brilliancy of the sun, of which it only gives back a pale and borrowed light. Let us not make it a parhelion.

For now I will lay down another general principle, of which this advice is only one application. And it is indeed more my object than any thing else, to suggest general heads of thought, which may be carried out and traced in the workings of life by an active-minded reader himself. *All our knowledge consists in discerning relations between two objects;* and to discern a relation between them, we must do two things, each equally essential, but the one seemingly opposed to the other. *We must take care to keep them connected; and we must also take care not to confound them in one.* If not brought close together, we cannot compare them; if brought too close, there is nothing to compare. Would you compare two kinds of water, you must keep them in separate vessels. Pour them into one, and comparison is lost. And so we must study heathen ethics in conjunction with Christianity; but not so assimilate them, as that either Christianity shall seem heathenism, or heathenism Christianity. On one side is God, on the other man; on one side faith, on the other reason; on one side law, on the other argument; on the one information, on the other experience; and (that which always forms an intrinsic inherent difference discoverable by even an untutored eye) on one side a perfect scheme, containing *all* that is necessary for man, matter for *all* his fa-

culties, objects for *all* his affections, laws for *all* his tendencies; on the other, an imperfect fragment wrought out from some single principle to answer some single purpose, and omitting others.

And this fact respecting the nature of all human knowledge may give us some clue to a question proposed at the beginning: Why syncretism, or confusion, is essentially a sin, and abhorrent to the nature both of God and man. The universe, indeed, is one; but it is also many. Every work of nature is one; but it is also many—composed of many parts. It would seem, not only from the deep mystery on which rests the very foundation of Christianity, but from the testimony of our own reason,[1] from the laws of our own affections, from the evidence of the works of God spread round us in boundless profusion—that there is something in the hidden attributes of God, in the awful sanctuary of his essential Being, which corresponds not merely with our notion of *unity*, as when we reverently believe that God is *one;* but also with our notion of *plurality*, as when, not presuming to explain, yet willingly repeating, what He has placed in our lips by the teaching of the Church, we confess "that in the unity of that Godhead there be three Persons."

You hear in the present day—(and do not think that I am wandering from my purpose in expounding the workings of a syncretistic spirit, beyond the exact limit of your ethical studies; for a principle fatal in them will be fatal in many others; and it will not prevail there without having spread, or afterward spreading throughout the whole system of life;)—you hear in the present day much about love, and charity, and mutual toleration; that we should overlook differences of opinion, and think

[1] See the Parmenides of Plato, which is written to develope this very principle.

only on points of agreement; that all men, however they vary in speculative doctrines, are in harmony on the great fundamental truths of religion and morals; that it is our duty to bind together, not to distract society; that Christianity itself boasts as its chief merit, that it preaches peace on earth, and goodwill among men. I answer, that it is false: that every one of these maxims is false, if not balanced by another of a very different nature; aye, and held in subjection to it—as false as the doctrine of art, that every work should be one, if not combined with a previous doctrine, that that one should be composed of many parts.

Christianity was not promulgated to unite all men in one fraternity,—as a wild fanaticism is now preaching in a neighbouring country, and a still worse indifference proclaims in this; but first to *select*, to make a distinction between one class of men and another,—those who would receive, and those who reject it. Our blessed Lord did not come down to send "peace on earth, but a sword." The very name of the Church is not "*confounded*," but *elect, called out and severed from the world;* and the consummation of all things will be, not when all souls shall be merged in one fate, but when "the one shall be taken, and the other left"—"the sheep set at the right hand, and the goats on the left." Christian love is not the love of a vague, undefined, general Being, as some moralists have said, but of a precise, rigidly prescribed, and peculiar character. Christian truth is not an abstract mist of speculation, like a form "without shape and void," but cut out and determined from falsehood by an outline sharp and hard as adamant, against which it is declared that all human tools shall be shivered, and the decay of years and ages shall be powerless. Christian laws are not Lesbian leaden rules, bending to the will of each

man who applies them; but they also are hard as adamant, full of resistance, describing differences, commanding exclusions, severing between the good and the bad, "piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit" (Heb. iv. 12.)

I assert that the primary law of our human being is *not confusion, but distinction;* that difference must precede resemblance, harmony be formed out of discord, plurality exist before unity; that syncretism, wherever it exists, whether it bids us reason without discerning between the true and the false; or act without severing between the right and the wrong; or live in society without excluding one class, and admitting another; or invent works of art without acknowledging any rules to bind us to one imitation, and to prohibit another; or govern without shewing any peculiar and distinctive favours; or worship without any definite creed, proclaiming all that differ from it to be error—that syncretism, wherever it is found, is false and fatal. If admitted into instruction in Ethics, it will make its way into religion. Syncretism in teaching, and Pantheism in religion, went hand in hand in the Platonism of Alexandria. They are moving hand in hand at this moment in Germany and France. And if the one obtains ground in England, the other will soon follow.

Observe, to commence with the senses, how the whole material fabric of the world is built upon distinctions. It is fashioned out of figures; figures are composed of lines; and every line is a limit, separating something on one side from something on the other. See how every leaf and flower is traced out into a net-work of the most delicate fibres; how the very sky is mottled with clouds; the one broad expanse of ocean ridged and furrowed with its "multitudinous dimples," *ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα*; the heavens

set and studded with stars; the globe wrapt in its "robe of divers colours;" air, and earth, and water peopled each with its separate tribes, each tribe set apart from the other by some peculiar organisation, each individual discernible by some one and appropriate symbol, each requiring to be known by one peculiar name. Man himself, the crowning work of creation, with all the unity of type and common nature prevailing through each individual, is yet infinitely diversified; so that no two men, perhaps, ever appeared upon the globe precisely alike, even in their animal configuration; not to mention the power of variation in his features, which enables *him* to exhibit, and *us* to trace, the minutest shades of mental feeling, by the vibration of a nerve, the varying of a shadow, the slightest fluctuation in the curves or angles of his lineaments. What would become of nature, if some syncretistic spirit were to insist on taking a sponge, and wiping out these fine and delicate distinctions: smearing over the sky; obliterating the tracery of the flower; daubing the earth into one tint; reducing the animal world, not only to one general type, but to one uniform mould throughout; covering man's face with a white sheet, through which no trace of a soul could be discerned, because no play or difference of feature was allowed?

Proceed to art. What is art built on but on difference? What is music, but "a distinction of sounds," and varieties of rhythm? What painting, architecture, sculpture, but an imitation of the boundless varieties of physical nature, to express a boundless variety of moral feelings? What language, but a multiplicity of articulations? What writing, but a combination of separate elements, in which difference is so essential, that without it meaning is lost?

So reason is the knowledge of differences—the perception of relation between objects, which, *however similar, are not the same.* It is a work of classification, in which an infinite variety of *separate* facts are not confounded together, but held *distinctly*, and yet *conjointly* under one head, by an act of the mind. Let them cease to be separate facts, and the whole work of reason is superseded. And so with moral feelings and affections, as well as moral actions. Vary a circumstance, omit an element, confuse a relation, and our feelings of love, or pity, or resentment, or admiration, change at once. Shift the slightest muscle under the skin, and the configuration of the body is altered; and its effect upon the eye altered also, and with it the ideas which it is intended to convey. And so vary or confound the sharp, clear pencilling of outline in the moral actions of man, and moral characteristics are obliterated, and with them our moral sentiments. And so, too, of society.[1] "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body."[2]

I assert, then, that there is something in the very constitution of our nature, which protests against the principle of blotting out distinctions, and confusing land-marks; something, which seems to imply that the whole universe, both physical and spiritual, is built upon distinctions; that variety—a variety definitely marked, and yet not inconsistent with

[1] See a beautiful passage, *Henry V.* sc. 2, act i.—

"Therefore doth heaven divide
The state of man in divers functions," &c.

[2] 1 Corinth. xii. 17.

unity — is as pleasing in the eye of our Creator, and as useful in the accomplishment of His plans, as it is in the eye of man to the fulfilment of human projects. And therefore that syncretism in itself is morally odious and offensive.

But follow the question more immediately into ethical speculation. Insist on it that all theories are alike; that they all contain the same fundamental axioms; and that the slight seeming discrepancies may be reconciled by an easy Procrustean process, or at any rate are wholly unimportant. Say of Ethics, and abstract reasonings in general, what men are now daring to say in matters of religion, and what is the consequence?

First, then, you are *asserting a falsehood;* for as no two human beings are precisely the same in form, so no two human systems of doctrine can be identical, or they would not be two. One will dwell more on this principle, another on that; one will be coloured with such a feeling, another with another; there will be an omission here, a fulness of statement there; a tone, a mannerism, and individuality of thought in each, which you cannot deny without a falsehood.

But you do not deny, you only attempt to obliterate them. Well, how are they to be obliterated? By erasures, by suppressions, by distortions, by sinking this, and magnifying that—here paring and rasping away, there filling out expressions—in one word, by the arts of forgery. There is a forgery in abstract speculations, just as in commercial dealings. In the third and fourth century of Christianity, a literal wholesale forgery of works was not an uncommon occupation, even of defenders of Christianity. And why? Because they were desirous of tracing Christianity distinctly in an anterior system, instead of contenting themselves with seeing it faintly imaged

in a most imperfect shadow. And after wresting what really was ancient to this purpose, they then proceeded by the same arts to invent what they wanted in addition — to forge a counterpart, where they had not one original. Shall we wonder that the spirit of syncretism is odious in the sight of God?

Once more. A man, who *values* his property, knows its limits to an inch; he is alive to the slightest trespass, marks the least change and variation. We are jealous over that which *we love and honour*, and like to secure and appropriate it to ourselves—not to throw down our fences. And if a man holds any system of truths, if he values them, studies them, understands them as he ought, he also will be keenly alive to their just boundaries and precise determination. He will keep them "as a sealed fountain and a fenced pool," lest waste may be committed on them —lest a bit be chipped off here, and a stain cast there; and instead of obliterating differences, he will be lynx-eyed in detecting, even excessive in magnifying them. Let us not be ashamed of confessing this, as if it were an infirmity of nature, because the infirmity of nature does sometimes make us irritable and unkind, instead of merely firm and discriminating. Firmness and truth would be cheaply purchased, even at the extravagant price of occasional persecution. But persecution does not follow from confidence, but from *distrust* in the soundness of our opinions. It is when we are suspicious of ourselves, that we become impatient of contradiction. And Christianity did not persecute, till the grounds of its faith had been subverted by the usurpations of Popery. Law-suits do not arise where the bounds of property are settled, but where they are indistinct. Men do not quarrel for precedency, when there is a herald's college to appeal to. Persons do not hate their known enemies

half as much as uncertain friends, who disappoint their expectations. And God has made us *jealous* over that which we love, and intended that we should love *real truth*, as the most precious of blessings, and the foundation of all other blessings. And therefore no man who has a value for truth can be a syncretist, and no syncretist have a value for truth.

Neither can he have any sense of the importance of what are called *trifles*. If he pronounces of any *system* that any part whatever is valueless, and may be amputated without affecting the whole, he is ignorant of one main law in the constitution of the world, and ignorant through levity and frivolity, or through dishonest prejudice. *In this world nothing is a trifle.* A painter was one day copying a portrait by Rembrandt. He took off shadow after shadow, light after light, line upon line, most accurately. Still the expression was wanting. Hundreds on hundreds of touches were valueless, till, by the aid of a microscope, he discovered one hair-like line beneath the eye; and this put in, the whole likeness came. So it is with all great things. It is only littleness of mind that cannot appreciate little things. On the eve of one of his greatest battles, the General, who, almost alone in this age, has shewn us what a great man is, was found sitting up in his tent, writing folio upon folio—upon what? on the comparative merits of tin and copper canisters for soldiers' use. Look at the works of nature. Do they exhibit any contempt for trifles? What is the pencilling of the flower, the plumage of the insect, the moulding of the leaf, the depth below depth of animated worlds, sinking down and down till sense is lost in tracing the minuteness of their structure,—but a witness against the ignorant man, who thinks that, in the sight of an infinite Being, any thing can be

little, when nothing can be great? Think of the human eye. It is the mirror of the mind, the telegraph of thought, the great actor in the pantomime of signs, by which we hold converse with our fellow-men, and read their souls. What is it but a little dot of light, shifting every moment, and forming an infinite variety of the minutest angles with the two ellipses of the eyelids? And yet by these slight variations we read the thoughts and passions of the mind within; as we read a whole world of truth, past, present, and future, of this world and of others, of man and of God, by little lines, and dots, and curves, and angles, of hair's-breadth thickness, in the forms of writing. So, think how a single voice will decide the fate of nations, even in the most popular of governments, so long as a majority decides; and without such a majority there can be no society. Think how one trifling act, even the wavering of a thought, will give a bias to the mind, and lay the foundation of a habit which nothing afterwards can alter. Think how, in a course either of virtue or of vice, all may be safe, or unsafe, up to a certain point; when again one little act consolidates the habit for ever. Before, there might be escape; now, there is none. Before, heaven might have been lost; now, it is gained for ever. Think how our moral affections rest mainly on what men call *trifles* —how *trifles* please, *trifles* disgust, *trifles* irritate, *trifles* excite admiration, *trifles* provoke emulation, *trifles* rouse jealousy, *trifles* consolidate love, *trifles* are the proof of virtue, *trifles* indicate the habit; and in all these cases, simply because they are *trifles*. Great occasions, violent temptations, gigantic efforts, superhuman prowess, these are rarely within our reach. And they are not required. They even diminish admiration. Our hearts are balanced on a point, and they will vibrate with a breath of air.

And then turn to the field of reasoning. If every principle contain, as in a Trojan horse, a host of applications,—if it is but the condensed summary, the quintessence of innumerable experiences, —so also every separate fact involves the principle itself. Of things inseparably united, no one part, however small, can be denied without the denial of the whole. If a man's hair were so connected with his body, that it could never be detached, the non-existence of a single hair would be as valid a proof against the existence of the man, as the non-existence of his whole body. And no fact whatever in nature is isolated. It has deep and unseen connexions with many, perhaps with all others. The world is built like that fabled roof of exquisite architecture, in which no one stone could be touched, without risking the ruin of the whole. It is hung, as a house exposed to thieves, with wires and bells crossing each other in every direction, and when any one spring is touched, the bells will sound in the most distant part—sound, at least, to those whose ears are alive and watching to catch the alarm, *φωνήεντα συνέτοισι*. And thus the most thoughtful men, whether in purely scientific morals, or in the system of revelation, are the most keenly sensitive to the value of what common men call trifles. They know that in law, and politics, and nature, and physical science, as well as in theology, there is an Athanasian creed—ay, and with its damnatory clauses, commanding us to make fine distinctions, to guard against the omission of iotas, to affirm positively and boldly subtle seeming oppositions, in which only a hair's-breadth separates the true from the false, the safe from the perilous; and which therefore it is the first business, and even the boast of the lawyer, the politician, the moralist, the physical philosopher, as well as the theologian, to discover, to proclaim, to

insist on, to warn their followers against negligence or presumption when dealing with them, in the very words of the theologian, "which faith, unless a man keep whole and undefiled he cannot be saved." Why was the refusal of "a private gentleman to pay twenty or thirty shillings to the king's service argued," says Clarendon, "before all the judges in England?" Because in those twenty shillings, one party saw the germ of a tyranny, and the other of a rebellion. Why will a lawyer warn you against permitting a neighbour to claim the gathering of even a leaf upon your estate, without contesting his right? Because the gathering the leaf may invalidate your title to the whole estate. Why will a wise politician contest so earnestly for the form of a word, or the wearing a hat, or the title of a writ? Because each of these will become a precedent; and in precedent is involved principle. Why will an engineer be alarmed at the first drop of water oozing through a dam? Because the rest, he knows, will follow it. Why is the discovery of one little bone in a stratum of rock enough to overturn a whole theory of geology? Because the little bone like a pack-thread, will draw after it the whole skeleton like a coil of rope; and the skeleton will imply the power which brought it to its site; and that power will be vast and pregnant with other influences; and thus the whole system of the science will be dragged into peril, as many other systems have been perilled, and have been upset by the merest trifle, by one little fact. Why will a spot of blood betray murder? Why will the print of a nail discover a thief? Why will a whole neighbourhood take flight at the sight of a little boy with only a little spark of fire going into a magazine of powder; or a crowd disperse upon the ice at the sound of the slightest crack? Because nature, as well as theology, has her Atha-

nasian creed and her damnatory clauses for those who neglect iotas—because nature, as well as theology, does not know what a trifle is.

And therefore Syncretism, which would cut off trifles—trifles not of human invention, (for these it may prohibit us from intruding on the body of definite revealed truth), but points which it deems insignificant within that body itself; or which, in Morals, would deal with little tendencies and separate phenomena as things of no importance—Syncretism, which would assimilate different schools by squeezing them all into one mould, cutting off this angle and defacing this outline, as if it were no part of their substance—this Syncretism is a direct violation of a paramount law of reason; and as such, God and nature have proscribed it.

Add, then, that these trifles in religion are parts of a definite revelation; that in morals they are placed before us on the authority of great and wise, though imperfect men; and that nevertheless we, the ignorant student, or the new original thinker, presume to determine that they are useless—just as if an anatomist would insist on amputating from the work of nature in the human body every organ of which he could not discover the intention,—and we shall see another sin in Syncretism, to make it perilous to man and odious to God.

We scarcely know, indeed, how the differences of sects and systems may be an essential condition for the preservation of truth in the world, and the proper development and play of human reason. They are mischievous, and we must try to extirpate them by bringing all men to the knowledge of truth. And yet if we attempt to extirpate them by any other method than those which God has appointed, we may be doing harm; just as the agriculturist succeeded in destroying one race of vermin, but

found, to his distress, that they had been formed to keep out another. The very rationalism which lies at the root of the syncretistic spirit, clamours loudly against any attempt to bind down the human reason to the slavery of some one system. Individual distinctions of thought and feeling are as natural, and may be as necessary for the general good, as distinctions of races, and castes, and professions. Property in knowledge may, under similar restrictions, be as great a good as property in land. And Christianity, rigidly as it guards the bounds of its precise revelation, keeping it as a sacred ground, a τέμενος set apart, and not to be profaned by human alteration, beyond this does give great scope for the peculiar tendencies of individual men.

Perhaps it is only in this way that we can gain a full knowledge of human nature, by observing it as it is depicted in various theories by different hands. Perhaps the reduction of them all to some one type might be as fatal to the progress of ethical science, as the passion of Michael Angelo for one single model in ancient sculpture, the Torso, was to the perfection of his art, when he persisted in reproducing it, fitly or not, in every work which he painted. Perhaps, as human minds are composed of a variety of faculties and affections, they require a variety of objects to act upon them. One man may be influenced by this notion; another by that. So Plato supposed that there were above us deities or angels, each with a peculiar character, under whom the peculiar characters of men ranged themselves at will.[1] And philosophical systems may serve the same purpose to the human reason. At any rate, we learn from their dissensions, the impotency and errors of human reason by itself. To force it always to tell the same tale, whether it would or not, is to give it

[1] Phædrus.

a seeming consistency and truth, which, in reality, it cannot possess. Hence Syncretism is always connected with an undue estimate of the human intellect, and this itself is a grand evil. But further I need not go. I will not stop to ask, if the object of the Syncretist can be gained. Is authority of any value, when we have turned and twisted it to serve our own purpose? or will a witness confirm a case, who answers yes to every question? And will men's jealousies and quarrels be appeased by this forced and strained conformity, or rather will they not be inflamed? For some trifles still must be found, in which they cannot agree. And who are so bitterly and so naturally enemies to each other, as those who agree in all essentials, and yet will not yield up their opinions in matters confessedly a trifle?

And now sufficient has been said to warn you against indulging in a habit of Syncretism, unless you wish to encourage animosity instead of promoting peace—to reduce philosophy to mere dregs and ashes—to confound right with wrong, truth with falsehood—to despise things which no wise man can despise—to set at nought authority—to obliterate distinctions from the world, which, as far as man can see, are necessary to its very existence. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" (Isaiah v. 20.)

CHAPTER X.

And now let me sum up briefly the rules for the study of Ethics, which result from the foregoing observations.

In the first place, be assured, that you have already all the knowledge required for common practice in the laws and doctrines of the Catholic Church.

Secondly, when you require to know how to manage these as a science, go to some Greek philosopher—some single one—and study the science there.

Thirdly, in making this selection, you will do well to choose Aristotle; not because his theory is the best, for it is far inferior to Plato's, but it is the most scientific, most elaborately and distinctly reasoned out.

Fourthly, be prepared to correct and enlarge Aristotle by Plato; and to Plato you may add all the other Greek sects and modern moralists, only referring whatever you find in them to the doctrines of Aristotle. They will serve to enlarge, to balance, to qualify, to contradict, to illustrate, to support him. Range all the moral information which they offer under heads supplied by Aristotle. In this manner you will attain variety without confusion; you will be continually building upon a regular fixed foundation. You will not be distracted between a choice of contending leaders; and you will have all the advantages of Eclecticism without its pre-

sumption, its chance-medley, and its ultimate degradation.

Fifthly, remember that nothing which comes to you on human authority, can be received, if contradicted by divine authority. Doctrines are not necessarily true because they are internally consistent, and can be demonstrated one from the other. To be true in the only right sense of the word *truth*, they must be agreeable to the word of God. Hold, therefore, Christianity in your hand, not only the Creed and the Catechism, but the Articles of your Church, its liturgies, and formularies, as so many touchstones by which to try the soundness of every ethical statement.

Sixthly, abstain from mixing up Christianity with the science of Ethics, though you thus carefully connect them. Do not look for more Gospel-truth in heathen minds than you can really trace. Read heathen writers in a heathen sense, see them as they are—do not strain their testimony, or bend their opinions to meet truths, of which they probably know nothing.

Seventhly, neither introduce science into Christianity farther than is absolutely necessary for *practical purposes*. It is very useful and necessary that you should understand the science of Ethics as a system, if you are to teach it to others. But it is not so necessary that you should make all Christianity itself a system. Let it remain as God himself has framed it—*a mystery;* some parts visible, some lying hid; some obviously connected, others seemingly separate; here passages opening into depths, which the human eye shrinks from exploring; there steps and doorways tempting us to ascend and wander through its unseen labyrinths. Attempt, with a profane curiosity, to lay the whole fabric open, to trace the chart and outline of every portion, to num-

ber every stone, and interpret every sculpture,—and the mystery is vanished. And with the mystery will vanish its deep and salutary influence, not only on the practice of the heart, but on the studies of the understanding. Be assured that whatever is intended to rule men's minds as a supreme authority and last standard of appeal, must be a *mystery*—something which we do not understand, of which we see only a part. Let the eye pass behind the throne, and see the sovereign in his closet, and the mystery of royalty will to the common eye be lost, and with it the keystone of society. Let man stand before man simply as a fellow-being, without a supernatural commission, and man has no authority. Look on the physical world barely as an object of sense, as something which we see, and hear, and touch, and handle, but be unable to trace in it any deep hidden secret, any power beyond its own, any meaning but what meets the eye,—and it is stripped of its glorious ministry as a witness to its Creator, and becomes our plaything or our slave. Attempt to demonstrate every thing, leaving no first principle unproved, to be received in faith, not to be explained by reason, and the very foundation of reason must be overturned. Lay bare the human mind, and let us see all its workings, and hear all its thoughts; let there be no mystery in human associations, and what would become of all our moral affections? Whom should we love, or honour, or trust, or feel shame in their presence, or strive to conform ourselves to their example, as we do now? Lay open all the past,—remove that solemn darkness now resting on antiquity, which makes it so venerable in our eyes, and fills us with self-distrust, and awe, and sobriety of mind, and keeps us walking in the old paths, and honouring our forefathers, and eschewing change, and preserving our inheritance of good rather than

"commit waste" upon its treasures,—should we not become pert, and conceited, and lawless—given to change—with no respect for ourselves, because we had no respect for others? And so, also, lay open the future—tell each man what will become of him—convert the dim dark flashes of prophecy, which now serve as warnings to affright, or hopes to console, into a broad steady glare, betraying the whole secret of the years to come,—and who would bear to live? There is a boundless craving in the human mind, and there must be a boundless object to satisfy it. What we love must be perfect, without taint or limit—what we honour must be infinite in power—what we fear must be beyond our realization—what we hope must be something "which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." Even the eye must have before it a boundless prospect, or it sinks wearied with beating against the narrowness of its prison-walls; and the intellect must have infinite depth to explore, for when curiosity ceases to be excited, and no more worlds of thought remain to be conquered, the intellect, like the Macedonian conqueror, has nothing left but to sit down and cry. And thus it is that the Gospel is a mystery, and as a mystery must be left. And when you are told that, as a teacher, you must study and understand it *scientifically*, remember that you do not follow the practice of the schoolmen. No portion is to be systematised, so as to remove it from its position. Very little, after all, can be subjected to this operation of arrangement; and even this must not be attempted except from a practical necessity. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain;" thou shalt not deal with his revealed word as a subject for profane curiosity, to be pulled about and dislocated by a bold hand and a prying eye—

" for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

And two more rules I will give you, of great practical importance. There are, we are often told, two ways of studying truth, of exercising reason. They are called *Induction* and *Deduction*. By *Induction*, it is said, you arrive at general principles *from* particular experiences. By *Deduction* you trace a general principle *in* particular experiences. By the former you collect all the spreading ramifications of the tree, and trace them back to the trunk. By the latter you commence with the trunk, and proceed to investigate the branches. And general principles, we all think, are higher and nobler than particular, and the discovery of them we deem the work of the most powerful minds. And to be condemned to do no more than prove what has been given to us by others, we think a servile task. Hence young men, whose reason is acute, and their thirst for knowledge eager, delight in *Induction*, and despise *Deduction*. They like looking forward, not back, ascending instead of descending, inventing instead of proving, novelty instead of antiquity. Now, then, let us add another paradox to those which have been suggested already. With all the parade which has been made by logicians, in distinguishing between these two processes, is there such a difference between them? Induction, to be an act of reason, to be legitmate, must be the same with Deduction. All that human reason can do is to prove what it receives. It invents nothing; and the rule which I wish to lay down is, that your whole study in Ethics must be the practice of Deduction; that is, of tracing in facts around you the general laws and axioms of morals, which are placed before you at the beginning by authority; just as the study of scholarship is only the appli-

cation of general rules of grammar to a variety of individual cases.

It has been my object hitherto to put before you such general laws and axioms as often as opportunity occurred, that you might take them as hypotheses, and try if you found them true in your common observation of facts. This is Deduction. You would rather invent the hypotheses for yourself; frame, that is, new theories. Do so. But where do they come from? They come, as I have said before, from the suggestion, not of your *reason*, but of some *mysterious power within you, unreasoning instinct*, by which, when once you have seen two things together, you expect to see them together again. You do not indeed bring the universal proposition, that they always will come together, formally before your mind; but the next time you see the one term, you will expect to see the other: and if they do come together again, by degrees the expectation will assume the form of an acknowledged truth, of an universal principle. Now, in what respect does this reception of the universal principle on the untried instinct of your own mind, uninterrupted, and therefore confirmed, by your own experience, differ from the reception of similar general principles on the testimony of others, they also being confirmed again by your own experience, by a process of deduction? The Induction, that is, the arrival at the general principle, is in each case the work of a power above you. It is *Instinct* in your own mind. It is the wisdom of others, when you receive it upon testimony.

Newton saw the apple fall to the ground. It occurred to him—it was not reasoned out—it was a suggestion of some power above him—that the same law might extend to other bodies. He took the hypothesis as an hypothesis, on the faith of his

own suggestion. Then he proceeded to apply it; that is, to see if the law held good in the facts around him. At first, it is well known that some miscalculations misled him; and he found, as he thought, the facts run counter to his theory, and his theory he abandoned. Nor did he resume it till these calculations had been found to be false. Then he once more ventured to examine the facts again, and he found them confirm his theory. So also you must do in every science. Take the general truths suggested to you by others, and trace them in the facts around you. If you would read the Bible as a reasoning and inquiring being, take the great doctrines of Christianity, as given you in the creeds and catechism of the Church, and observe how they occur in every page: hidden in history, implied in precept, wrought out in types and allegories, hinted at in words and sounds, incorporated in persons—the one same body of truth in an infinite variety of phenomena. So also study Ethics. Take from Aristotle and from Plato, where they are sanctioned by the Church, their fundamental axioms of morals. Trace these axioms in all the phenomena before you. Read them in history; develop them in art; follow them into the minute delineations of private character and of common life. If they are true, you will find them everywhere. You will delight in the pursuit, innocently and inexhaustibly. You will use reason without abusing it. You will confirm instead of destroying your belief. You will be performing the high work which God has assigned to the reason, of throwing disorder into order, and *reducing plurality to unity*, without abandoning the moral duties of obedience, of faith, of self-distrust, of respect for others. Your exercise will be the same with the rationalist, so far as the exercise of reason is concerned; but it

will not be irrational enough to prefer a suggestion, simply because it comes to you *not* through the mouth of a fellow-creature. You will not think, like the rationalist, that what other men tell you must be false, and what comes into your own head, by the working of your own brain, must be true.

And one more suggestion I will make. Do not limit the field of morals. The science of Ethics is the science of education. The education of man is the education of the whole man; and man is a compound being, with many faculties and various actions; and he is, by permission from God, the centre of the world here below; the source of all those operations in it, which do not flow either from the fixed, unaltered laws of matter, or from the miraculous interpositions of God. How vast and how many they are, I need not shew. Man is born an infant; by education he may be reared to a giant. He is ignorant, and by it may be made wise; sinful, and may become holy; the prey of evil, and may be raised higher than the angels. His very body, that fragile casket in which his soul is lodged, depends for its preservation on the care of man. It is man that subdues nature to himself; that creates a whole universe of art; that preserves the treasures of the past; that anticipates the future by prophecy; that binds up societies and kingdoms, framing powers unknown to individuals, and holding together man with man, and generation with generation, in a communion of interest, and law, and truth. And this communion is maintained by language, which is a cast from the soul itself, retaining its finest lineaments, and keeping it constantly before us, when the soul itself is invisible or gone. And the laws by which the mind acts are few and universal, buried deep in the constitution of its nature, but springing out from thence into all

the multiplicity of its actions. History, therefore, and legislation, and economy, and art, and philology, and poetry, and metaphysics, even the sciences of matter as correlatives to the faculties of the mind, are to form part of your moral studies. If you attempt to restrict them to what an ignorant age calls *moral*,—that is, to laws against murder, and theft, and adultery, and false witness,—you will know little of the depth of their meaning; and morals will be to you as a slip of knowledge torn from its parent stem and planted in a barren soil, as if it would grow. No man ever penetrated far into any study, but he was carried up at last into principles which are the source of all others; and no man ever studied wisely, who stopped short of these depths. If you are afraid of depth; if you think that general principles are useless, because to be stated generally they must assume an abstract and mysterious character; if you will deal only with what shallow-minded men call *practical* questions—as if any thing could be practical which is not founded on truth, or any thing could be true which, if expressed in all its fulness, would not seem a mystery and a problem,—you are not a fit person to study morals, or any other science. Nature has intended you for a drudge, not for a leader; to obey others, without knowing why and wherefore. Be content with this; it is all you are fit for. And if you attempt to reason, you will only reason wrongly, and aid in bringing down the human mind to a poor and degraded vulgarity both of thought and action. And be assured you will do infinite mischief. Men are sick of the shallow, superficial, meagre speculations which these *practical* notions have engendered. They want depth, and mystery, and vastness; and if they cannot find them in a true system, they will seek for them in the false. If the Christian philo-

sophy of England will not supply them with this food for the mind, they will go for it to the anti-Christian rationalism of Germany; and they are doing this already. Trace the ruin of states. It begins with so-called practical politicians; men without deep thought, therefore without high minds, therefore without boldness of conception, or energy of action, or confidence in truth or in themselves. Look to the corruptions of religion. They began when men lost sight of the mysteries of Christianity, and made religion a practical engine for the government of the world. Examine works of art. You never had a great painter, or a great architect, or a great sculptor, who was not a deep philosopher; whose practice was not founded on abstract theory; whose feelings, if thrown into words, would not have been a mysticism.

Take in, therefore, under the science of Ethics the whole range of human operations and of facts which are connected with man. Let us not continue to have, as we now have, the mutilated, dissevered limbs of a mighty philosophy served up to us in fragments: religion without theology; theology without morals; duties to man without duties to God; art without science; feeling without a standard of truth; taste without reason; politics without philosophy; language without metaphysics; metaphysics without practice; history without theory; and physics without end or object, save the accumulation of wealth. Thus torn from each other, every one must wither away. Bring them back and unite them, as the great philosophers of Greece did, upon one common stem, deeply rooted and solidly grown,—the science of the education of man,—and they may once more flourish.

And let us not be afraid of the reproach which led to this unnatural separation, at present prevail-

ing. Men were accused of confounding together distinct sciences; of explaining spiritual things by material; of making music a medicine, and government an art of rhetoric, and theology a system of metaphysics. And because these things had been thus confused, it was thought expedient to separate them altogether. This is the practice of man. Put him up, says Luther, on one side of his horse, and like a drunken peasant he tumbles down on the other. He was commanded not to confound two things, and he proceeded to divorce them. But it is one thing to confuse, and another to connect without confusing; one thing to interpret one stream of science by the laws of another, but a very different thing to trace up any one to its highest principles, and then follow them down as they branch off into a variety of subjects.

"And God gave Solomon," we are told, "wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore. And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt.... And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom" (1 Kings iv. 29-34).

CHAPTER XI.

And now, having suggested some general rules for the study of Ethics, — rules which have an especial reference to the circumstances under which the science will be brought before you in the present day,—I will proceed to sketch out an outline of its chief principles, as they are laid down in Christianity.

To do this, let us once more go back about fifteen centuries, and imagine ourselves standing by the side of the cradle of an infant, with a Father of the Church and a heathen philosopher standing with us, and contemplating the condition and prospects of that little child. What is the first thought which would strike us all? Here is a little helpless babe, unconscious of our presence, unable to move, or think, or reason, more entirely at the mercy of circumstances than the young of any brute animal dropped from the womb of its mother, and trusted to instincts and to Nature! And yet in a few, a very few years, this babe will become a man. His senses may expand to take in a vast range of Nature. His affections be kindled, his impulses roused to grasp at every object which comes near him, and to concentrate them all round himself. He may govern states, command armies, wield the destinies of millions, speak with a voice which shall go down to the latest generations, pierce into the past and the future with the eye of a prophet, bend down the material world to be his slave, enroll himself a denizen of the spiritual world, become the companion of sages, the

friend of angels, the imitator of God, and almost a God himself. Christian Fathers and heathen philosophers would both agree in this.

But they would also agree in a darker thought. This infant may become an angel, even more than an angel — but he may also become a devil. His senses may be opened, but to take in nothing but suffering. His affections be inflamed, but with a perpetual inextinguishable fever; his whole soul be the slave of impulses, like a weak, helpless woman, tost about in mockery by the buffetings of a crowd. His whole life may be a straining, impotent and convulsive, after a good, which he cannot reach, or which turns into ashes in his grasp. He may govern states and command armies, but so as to bring down on his head the blood and the curses of mankind. He may be known to latest generations as a by-word, or the father of evil. He may look back into the past, but so as to feel nothing but remorse; and forward, but only to despair. Instead of commanding the material world, he may be its slave and victim; instead of citizenship in a heavenly polity, he may be placed within sight of it, but excluded from any share in its blessing; the companion of sinners and evil spirits, the abhorred of angels, the criminal under the scourge of an offended and inexorable Judge. Which of these two pictures shall be realised, and what part is man to take in rescuing him from the evil, and ensuring for him the good?

The heathen would talk of education. He would insist on the need of watching over the child, punishing his early bad propensities, developing his better faculties, surrounding him with inducements to good; appealing to his reason, forming him as man by man, after the best model which man can supply, and by the best rules of human experience. The Christian also would say the same. But all

this, he would also say, must be vain, without something else. Before any thing can be done, or hoped, a ceremony must be performed over the child. What is it?

And I propose to go back fifteen hundred years, —not as if the same ceremony in its essential features would not be insisted on at present—has not been performed over each of us who are members of the Christian Church,—but because at that period it was more minutely developed, and contained more distinctly the types and symbols of all the great ethical truths which Christianity implies. It contained them in outward forms. And, before they are described, let me caution you—you, the young reader,—how you are misled by a foolish language, common in the present day, and call them idle forms, and silly superstitions. If you are ever to understand what education is, and to be capable of applying it, you must learn to think of forms, and ceremonies, and outward symbols, in a very different light from that in which ignorant men regard them now.

How great is the importance of forms in education, you may learn from the multitude of forms imposed by God himself in the Jewish law. What the precise object of them was, we may not be able to see; but they could not have been contemplated by God as idle, superstitious ceremonies. Look again at civil society: what are its magistrates, its laws, its punishments, its modes of procedure, its buildings, dresses, conventional privileges, titles, precedences, badges, etiquette, prescriptive usages, but forms, and outward symbols of certain great truths enshrined in them? Take away the symbols, and what will become of the truths? Why keep up the state of kings? Why clothe our judges in ermine? Why raise palaces for the makers and

interpreters of our laws? Why fix badges of honour? Why lay down technical rules for behaviour? Let us take the opportunity of examining generally the theory of forms. For we are living in an age which despises them, and to this contempt we owe no little part of our moral evils.

By a form, then, is meant some outward act or object, intended to represent an inward spiritual meaning. The king's crown is a symbol of his supreme power. The priest's white dress, of the purity which should clothe his life. Kneeling is the form of devotion. Black is the sign of sorrow. Uncovering the head is a form of respect. The external usages of society are forms for refinement of mind and general benevolence. And that these forms have a very close connexion with the moral nature of man, and especially with his education, you must easily perceive. When men wish to destroy the respect due to royal authority, they begin by stripping kings of their external splendour. When religion is to be made a matter of indifference, churches are turned into barns, and church-services denuded of all solemn ceremonials. When the French revolutionists wished to extirpate from their country the very thought of their monarch, they obliterated the name first. And when Almighty God introduced into his fallen universe a new spirit, to recall it to himself, he enshrined it in a visible Church, in the forms of human bodies, of an established society, of outward ceremonies, which may be as necessary to the maintenance of his Spirit among men, as the body is necessary to the preservation of the soul.

In dwelling at length upon this subject, do not suppose that you are digressing from the main subject of Christian Ethics. On each side of Christianity there are two schools of distinct ethical

characters, differing in their views of education and fundamental principles of philosophy. And in no point is this difference more palpable, or in the present day more carefully to be observed, than in their notions of the nature of forms. Without rightly seeing their errors, we shall be liable to be misled by them. Without rightly appreciating forms, and comprehending their use, we shall not understand the most essential laws of Christian Ethics.

One of these schools, then, considers forms as every thing. They would multiply, maintain them strictly, compel a servile obedience to them, without regard to the spirit which ought to pervade them, and of which they are to be the types and symbols. Thus they would think much of the outward honour due to regal power, and which implies the relation between a father and viceroy of God on one side, and a child on the other,—such being the true relation between a king and his people, and from which the external forms of royalty were developed,—but they would pay little attention to cherishing the real spirit of a father in the king, and of a child in the people. They would load religion with rituals and ceremonies, betokening awe in the worshipper, holiness in the priest, power and glory and goodness in Almighty God. But the real life-blood of religion, the real awe and holiness of spirit, intended to be embodied in these ceremonies, they would permit to decay.

Again, in society, they would be satisfied with creating a number of technical rules, by which men of good taste and breeding might be distinguished; minute ceremonies and formalities, implying respect for rank, benevolence to companions, abstinence from gross offences, from selfishness, and the like; such as uncovering the head to superiors or to females, using the ordinary titles, subscribing ourselves in

terms of deference, giving precedency to each other, and a multitude of other minute forms, each implying a virtuous feeling within, — but for the real virtuous feeling they would care little. Satisfied with an external refinement, they would overlook the real goodness of the heart, from which they are presumed to flow. Like the Egyptians, they embalm the body, wrap it up in fine linen, paint it, gild it, stick it up in their houses before their eyes, and scarcely seem to know that the life is vanished.

The other school is just the reverse. The moment they see the spirit is departed, that moment they destroy the form. They profess to think wholly of the spirit—they talk largely of pure virtue; of reason disentangled from the fetters of superstition; of liberty; of the superiority of mind to body; of the uselessness, and worse than uselessness, of the hypocrisy, of preserving forms when men have ceased to feel them. They describe forms as mere helps to the ignorant; as contrivances of ambitious men, for the purpose of enslaving the imagination of their subjects. They think them purely arbitrary; that they may be changed at will; that wise men may do without them; and that they never should be employed, except in condescending compassion to the infirmity of weak minds. To this school (observe how deeply the principle spreads through the whole system of life)—to this school belong all those who despise established institutions, hereditary succession in governments, positive laws, adherence to precedents in practice; who think that all religion consists in feeling, without obedience; that religious doctrines may be left free to the reason of the worshipper, without technical creeds to confine them; that religious worship is only fettered and degraded by fixed formularies, seasons, modes, and ceremonies; who measure right not by positive enactments,

but by vague calculations of advantage, or still vaguer sentiments of equity; who in their relations with man set at nought the received usages of society, follow their own caprices, demand indulgence for individual license; who in reasoning will receive nothing on authority and testimony, but measure every thing by internal evidence instead of external, or, as they call it, by its truth, that is, by its accordance with their own sentiments; who on the same principle build up hypotheses and theories without any reference to external facts; who in works of art consider that all technical rules, all attention to accuracy of imitation and minute details, may be dispensed with—that the imagination may range wildly and fantastically, and create monsters at will; who in language believe that words are mere arbitrary conventional signs, which have no deep hidden connexion with the thoughts which they express; that the body, again, is a mere shell, in which the soul is confined, and not mysteriously blended with it in one being; who indulge in what is called diffusive benevolence, in plans of general distant good, while they overlook the plain homely duties of life that lie before their feet; who regard the material world as a fabric convenient for the habitation of man, ministering to his wants, beautiful to his eye, but cannot read it as a book full in every part of a mysterious symbolical knowledge. The very notion of symbolism is to them a folly. Tell them of great consequences lurking hid in trifles—of vast truths intimated in enigmas—of a spiritual atmosphere of thought and feeling pervading the whole world of sense, so that a spiritualised eye

> "Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in every thing"—

and they call it mysticism and fanaticism. In the

same manner they read the Bible. It is to them, especially the Old Testament, a bare chronicle of facts. Its types, and prophecies, and deep Christian mysteries, shadowed out in casual occurrences and petty regulations, they cannot see. They take a broad general view — enlarged, they presume to call it — of the divine word and dispensation; and all which does not fall within this outline, they reject as insignificant.

Now, what is the inevitable end of a school like this? They begin, as the Puritans of old began, with exalting spirit over matter, the soul over the body, the thing signified over the form which signifies it, until they lose sight wholly of the inferior objects, and undervalue forms altogether. This done, they lose sight also of the spirit; and they end in becoming wholly materialists. They alter forms of government, to realise some imaginary perfection. They are unable to attain this perfection; and they soon succumb to the first new form which a tyranny may establish. They set at nought forms of religion with a view to promote piety; and without them piety soon dies: and as they cannot do without some appearance of religion, again they take up some new form, and adhere to it with a species of idolatry. They abandon accurate imitation in the arts, in order to embody some elevated conception beyond and above rule. It eludes their grasp, and they become servile mannerists, and nothing more. They despise the formalities of society, and they come to have "*a way of their own.*" In one word, neglect of forms appointed by authority ends necessarily in a bigoted subjection to forms invented of ourselves. And instead of reaching a higher degree of spirituality without them, all spirituality is finally lost; as ascetics, who aimed at mental purity in a total separation from their bodies, came at last to justify all

kinds of sensuality, as if the body, however polluted, could not affect the mind — as atheists are invariably superstitious — as innovators are always bigots — as democrat is but another name for tyrant — as hatred for the ancient forms of the Catholic Church preserved in popery led naturally to the formalities of puritanism, but formalities which contained no truths, and which had no sanction but human invention. All moral error runs in a circle. Follow one extreme in order to avoid another, and it will infallibly bring you round to the very evil from which you were endeavouring to escape.

What, then, is the true theory of forms? It is the one which neither maintains forms without spirit, nor spirit without forms. Man is made up of soul and of body; and spiritual truths and laws can no more be preserved in the world without bodily forms in which to incorporate them, than the soul of man in this earth can act or exist apart from his body. And as the body is the type and symbol of the soul, forms are the natural shadows and delineations of the spirit. But forms are even more immediately an object for our care than spirit. You must clothe and feed the body of an infant, before you talk to it of virtue or vice. You must lay down rules for men to act on, before they follow them from principle. You must rear your scaffold before you build your walls. Spirit is the end — forms are the means. But Aristotle will tell us,[1] that not only is "the end greater than the means," but in one point of view the "means are greater than the end;" since without them the end cannot be obtained.

Whence, then, the importance of forms? First, our great business in this life is to learn the attributes and workings of the minds which surround us; — of human minds on earth — of the Divine mind in heaven.

[1] Rhetoric.

Learning these, we understand our relations to them; on this our feelings and affections to them follow—from our affections flow our actions—upon our actions are moulded our habits—our habits constitute our perfection. But how is this knowledge to be attained without some outward form? For the minds themselves are hidden from the human eye. Language, therefore, and the lineaments of the face, and outward actions, are the forms through which we read them. And this is the first use of forms, or "outward visible signs" of inward spiritual meanings, addressing themselves to the senses. They are the necessary interpreters of the mind, which without them we could not study. And the same is the case with societies. We must love our country, our family, our church, our neighbourhood. Now all these are *abstractions*. We never see them with our eyes; and common minds cannot realise their existence without some sign or symbol of their presence. Hence the moment a society is formed, it requires some place of meeting, a building, dress, or watchword, generally some individual person to represent it, to make it visible, to express its character, and gather round it the affections of the several members. Without such outward forms, we could have no steady or clear perception of our relations to societies, any more than to individual minds. And with the loss of this relation we should lose some of the most important duties and virtues of our nature.

But the human mind is also to be educated. For this purpose it must have placed over it constantly certain permanent grand rules of right,—high truths which surpass its comprehension, until it is perfect itself. Without such a high standard drawing up human nature to itself, human nature would soon sink to a low vulgar level. You cannot draw up trees except by planting larger trees about them,

nor rear infants except by the aid of adults, nor form weak men to heroism except by the constant presence and encouragement of heroes. But how is this standard to be maintained? Shall it be trusted to the spontaneous goodness of human beings? Shall we make a good man, and leave his goodness alone to inspire the same spirit into others? But he is frail and fallible. His character is not permanent. He is but an individual. To display his goodness he himself must invent some forms, and must inculcate them on others. Why not establish forms independent of his personal character? Let them be types and representatives of the goodness which he ought to possess. Have forms of prayer, which may teach men how they ought to pray, whether the priest who offers them up pray properly or not. Enact laws, which good men would enact, whether the legislator be good or bad. Surround authority with signs of respect, which imply that it comes from God, whether it be wielded according to the will of God, or not. Let there be a constant witness to truth and justice and holiness placed before the eyes of man; embodied in objects distinct from men themselves, which may survive when man becomes corrupt; testify when they are silent; influence when they are powerless; recall when they have ceased to care for the wanderings of their flock. This is another use of forms. They secure truths, both moral and intellectual, from perishing with the decay of human goodness; just as the human body retains the vital principle, though we sleep, or faint, or become weak and sickly, lie in a trance, fall into a delirium, are paralysed, or decrepit.

So, also, forms are necessary to preserve the memory of these truths from one generation to another. Thus, our liturgy has preserved to us the

doctrines of the Church, though the men, of whom the Church has been composed, have successively died away; just as the atoms of the body evaporate, and yet the body still continues. So men raise buildings to perpetuate the memory of transactions. So property is entailed, that the family may be preserved, though the several heads of it disappear one after the other. So, in our English constitution, the king is said never to die.

Another use of forms is remarkable. Men's feelings, you may observe, and their thoughts, are of a very changeable nature. It is difficult to remember and retrace them. We are never quite sure that we felt exactly in this way, entertained precisely this notion. Try and recall the state of your mind at any one period, and you will see how hard it is to feel *certain* about it. Now, there are many cases in life, when it is of the utmost importance that we should *be sure and certain* that we have done something, or received something. We make a promise. If we were at liberty to forget this, or feel a doubt of it, the promise would be good for nothing. Or another person makes a promise to us. Unless we are quite confident of the fact, we cannot act upon it. For this reason, in all such cases, men require some sign, some outward form or mark, which may remain, when the impression on the mind has passed away. And this must evidently be something addressing itself to the outward senses. For the senses, remember, (it is an axiom of the greatest importance in Ethics), are the most uniform, least fallible, most impressive, most durable channels, through which knowledge is conveyed to us. Hence, all bad ethical schools, such as the Grecian sophists, the sceptics, and Hume, have endeavoured to undermine our trust in them. Christianity, on the other hand, recognises their validity, as greater than that

of either our imperfect understanding, or our corrupted consciences; and rests its evidence on the testimony of the senses to miracles. The Church is commanded to witness only "what it has seen and heard."[1] This sign, then, may be words; as when a man declares his intentions before witnesses. Or it may be addressed to the eye, as more durable, and less liable to deception: hence written documents—hence treaties were engraved upon pillars — pledges are given for promises — symbols or tallies are invented, by which the possessor of one knows that the possessor of the other will act to him in a particular way. Hence God vouchsafed to give the sign of the rainbow to Noah; to fix the sign of circumcision, as a pledge of his covenant with Abraham. Forms and outward signs of inward feelings act in this point of view as in the case of the lady, who dreamed she saw a ghost who touched her wrist and burned it. She woke up, it is said, and thought it a dream; but there was the mark upon her wrist, and she believed it real.

One more use of forms and outward acts is, that they impress the mind. A man makes a resolution secretly. But if he writes it down, or in any way embodies it in some action, or work, he feels much more obliged to keep it.

> Segnius irritant oculos demissa per aurem,
> Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus.—*Horace.*

How little ordinary men think of crimes, which have been merely planned in the heart, but never accomplished in action! Even the holy Church, with all its warnings and condemnations against sins of thought, distinguishes between them and sins of act. She deems it a providential blessing from God, if He saves us from committing bad acts, even

[1] See the Acts *passim.*

when we had deliberately planned them: and on this very principle, that the outward act is something worse even than the inward thought. It is, in fact, that which finishes and puts the seal to a whole train of antecedent acts; as the fruit, without which the tree is valueless, is the consummation of the planting, the growth, the blossoming, the circulation of the sap, the gradual ripening,—which occupied such a space before it, but which, apart from it, have little meaning. How many years of decay precede the fall of a building;—but unless, at the very last, one little atom gave way, the fall would never happen. How deeply is the constitution sapped in every part by a long sickness; but it is the "last drop of blood rushing back to the heart," which, says the poet, "extinguishes the rays of man's setting life."

ἐπὶ δὲ καρδίαν ἔδραμε κροκοβαφὴς
σταγών, ἅτε καὶ δορὶ πτωσίμοις
ξυναύτει βίου δυντὸς αὐγάς.
Agamem. 1090.

Follow out this law of our present nature, and you may see something of the importance of an external act, in which men embody and put the coping-stone to their resolutions, as well as of an external impression made upon their senses by an outward form.

Upon all these grounds, you will not be surprised if you find that the Church commences her work of education with *an outward form;* if, being deeply impressed with certain great truths, under which she is acting, she represents them in a variety of ways; is not content with keeping them in her own mind, nor with expressing them to you through the forms of *words* only, (for words are as much forms as acts); but embodies them in forms addressed to the eye, and pours out her inward spirit and thought into shape and sight, as the vital principle in man throws

itself forth into the organisation of the body, creating by its own power an outward material fabric, with which to clothe itself, and become sensible to man; and as the vitality of the seed manifests its presence by springing up into a vast development of boughs, and leaves, and fruit, and flowers, by which, and which alone, we can learn its existence and its nature. It would be a hard and unnatural compulsion, which should prohibit a spiritual being from thus giving vent to his feeling, whether others would be affected by it or not. In a desert island, a single shipwrecked sailor would need, and would use forms, as the necessary accompaniment of his internal emotions. He would kneel when he prayed —look up when he was grateful—set apart times and places for devotion. Let his body, and all that was affected by his body, follow the natural impulses, and go with his soul, just as the vessel obeys the movement of the will of the steersman. Divorce the two, and you separate matter and mind; and the separation is fatal. Or rather, you cannot separate them. For you cannot have forms of any kind, without some meaning implied in them, some spirit which they will represent to the observer, whether it is intended or not. A man refuses to uncover his head to his sovereign, lest the form should speak servility. He keeps his hat on, which is also a form; and the bystanders cannot but interpret it as a mark of contempt. And, on the other hand, you cannot have spirit without forms; or a good feeling without good action; because it is the very nature of feeling and of mind to act, to make itself visible, to diffuse itself; and, to do this, it must generate forms. Thus, good works are the forms of faith. Kind actions, words, and looks, are the forms of benevolence. Works of art are the forms of imagination. The shape and direction given to

the mind by itself, are the forms of the virtuous or vicious principle by which it is governed.

But, once more: the forms which the Church uses in education are not "only signs of profession, and marks of difference;"[1]—they are something more. Let us see, if in this also there is anything like our common experience; whether, in our daily little outward forms, the merest insignificant acts are not constantly, under certain conditions, the mightiest of engines, real instruments, and channels for conveying to us great good, which without them cannot be obtained. A man enters into a bank; he presents a cheque for three millions of money.[2] The clerk takes the bit of paper, looks at it, refuses to pay the money. Why? because a little almost imperceptible mark is wanting in the signature of the name; which the owner of the money had agreed to make, and which the clerk does not discern. It is pointed out, and the money is paid. An army is ranged in order of battle. They stand perfectly motionless. One blast of a trumpet, and the whole mass is in motion. Swords are brandished; cannons are fired; troops charge; the battle is won; perhaps an empire saved or lost; all depending on that blast of the trumpet. Why? because the commander had appointed that signal, and the soldiers believed in him and it. Napoleon places himself at a little wooden table, in the palace of Fontainebleau. In less than a minute, he scrawls a few black lines on a bit of paper. The whole French empire, with its millions of subjects, millions of wealth, the destinies of Europe, of innumerable generations, all change at once; just as the fate of an individual would be changed, if his own head could be cut off from his

[1] See Articles of Religion xxvii. xxviii.

[2] Such a cheque is preserved in the Bank of England now as a curiosity. It was drawn, I believe, during the French war.

body, and another could be fixed on it. They pass from one master to another, by virtue of that little signature, attached to that little scrap of paper. Why? because Napoleon has agreed that such signature shall be the sign of his abdication, and the allied sovereigns believe him. If either condition were wanting, the signature would be as worthless as any marks which a child scrawls on his first copy-book. There is an immense fleet lying at anchor at Spithead, all motionless; every eye strained to watch something at the top of one mast. A bit of wood on the top of a tower moves up. Instantly all hands are at work. Anchors are weighed. Sails are unfurled. The fleet is sailing, it knows not whither. Why? because the admiral has hoisted a flag; and the admiral has hoisted a flag because that bit of wood on the top of the tower put itself in motion; and that bit of wood was put in motion because a plain ordinary sort of gentleman, sitting in a room in London, moved about his tongue and his throat for a second, and produced a few strange sounds; and these sounds he produced because he saw on a bit of paper, just put into his hand, certain little black marks, as big as a pin's-head—perhaps this one, *no*—instead of this other, *yes*—which conveyed to him the news of some mighty revolution in another quarter of the globe, which made the safety of Europe depend on the sailing of this fleet.

Signs, therefore, and forms,—conventional signs between two parties, when one party appoints, and the other agrees to acknowledge or believe in them, —are instruments of incalculable power. They are means of transferring from one person to another the whole power of which he is master. Nothing is too great for them to convey. A bit of paper will carry a whole world. And on this use of signs political economists pride themselves. They boast

that they have now established a system founded upon credit, (a Christian might call it faith), by which one party promises to abide by his word, when that word has been given by some signal agreed on, (the smaller and less perceptible to common eyes the better), and the other promises to trust him, and act upon that signal whenever it is recognised. Thus it is, they say, that the immense activity of commerce is now carried on with such silence, rapidity, ease, and gigantic results. Blest paper-money has accomplished this great good. Wherever secrecy, certainty, extent of influence, rapid movement, vast consequences, are required and implied, you must, they say, have recourse to little secret mysterious signs, only intelligible to those who fix and use them. The discovery of them is the grand invention of modern days.

They are undoubtedly right. And they will recognise at once the wisdom of following a similar plan in all other cases, where great transfers or gifts are to be made, which it may be expedient to keep from the common eye, or even impossible to shew. All that they will require will be, that a positive appointment of certain signs for the purpose should be made by the person who is proprietor of these great gifts; that he should be a "person of honour," true, that is, to his word; and then, (without which, all is useless), that the party receiving them should give credit, or in less commercial language, should put faith in the giver, and recognise the sign as the channel through which he has agreed to act.

If you, reader, know anything of that Christianity which you profess, you will know to what I have been alluding. You will know that the Church educates not merely by words, by advice, and instruction; but mainly and chiefly, by communicating to you certain spiritual gifts of immeasurable

value, "unseen, but not unfelt." And these it professes to communicate through the means of certain outward acts and symbols; "outward visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace given to us; ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof." Its great instruments of good are the sacraments. And these sacraments, 1500 years ago, were administered with many more symbolic forms than they are at present; especially the sacrament of baptism, which is the beginning of your Christian education; the act, in which are condensed all the great truths of Christian Ethics; and to which, therefore, let us go back. Our own forefathers, at the English Reformation, did indeed cut off from that act many outward forms, with which the ancient Church had surrounded it; because those outward forms had been abused: but they did not deny the truths which the forms were intended to convey. And we may read these truths more clearly and legibly in those symbolic rites than in any human words.

CHAPTER XII.

My object, then, is to point out the ethical views exhibited by the ancient Catholic Church in its celebration of Baptism, and preserved by our own branch of it, though we have not retained all the forms by which they were expressed,—views respecting the condition of human nature, the end to which it should be brought, and the means of educating it. And having prepared you, I hope, not to turn away in ridicule from what silly and ignorant men would now be disposed to call superstitious mummeries, I will take in order the chief ceremonies which the Church would have performed over an infant, when she commenced its education.

The first is one which, in this age of miscalled enlightenment, when men can scarcely bring themselves to believe that there are either angels or spirits, much less that there are spirits of evil about us, will startle them the most.

The Church would have first taken the infant, and *solemnly exorcised it;* that is, by prayer, and breathing upon it, and making the sign of the cross upon the forehead, and imposition of hands, it would endeavour to free it from the power of an evil spirit, to which its birth subjected it. "Per exorcismum contra diabolum vindicatur."[1] "No one is to be admitted into the Church," says Cyprian,[2] "unless they have first been exorcised and baptised,—nisi exorcizati et baptizati prius fuerint." To purge from the devil, "purget a diabolo," is the expres-

[1] Fulgent. Opera, p. 606. [2] Concil. Carthag. p. 232.

sion of another writer.[1] "Purgatio exorcismi," "the fire of exorcism," "the driving away the unclean spirit," are other terms for the same thing. "When any one comes to the sacrament of baptism, whether he be an infant or adult, they are not admitted to the fountain of life, before by exorcisms and insufflations of the clergy the unclean spirit is driven from them."[2] "Receive the rite of exorcism," says St. Cyril, "with solemnity. When thou art exorcised, when thou art breathed on, think it a means of salvation, *σωτηρία σοι τὸ πρᾶγμα νόμισον εἶναι*."[3]

We are not at all concerned to defend either the ancient Catholic Church, who retained this practice of exorcism, which our Lord and his apostles had practised themselves, nor our own English reformers, who rejected it, as not being essential to the sacrament of baptism, and liable to superstitious abuses. It would be far better for us all, if we were more superstitious than we are; for superstition is better than indifference; fearing God too much is wiser than not fearing him at all; having too keen and deep a sense of spiritual mysteries around us is a more exalted frame of mind than believing in nothing but senseless matter. But with this we have nothing to do. The ancient Church did practise exorcism; and therefore the facts which exorcism implies were parts of her ethical creed. And what does it imply?

Now there is a fundamental problem, which meets us not only at every step in common life, but at every search into human nature,—the origin of evil. You cannot take up an ethical treatise of any kind, ancient or modern, heathen or Christian, with-

[1] Petr. Chrysolog. serm. cv. p. 277.

[2] Gennad. de Dogmat. Eccles. c. xxi.,—Oper. August. t. iii. p. 200.

[3] Præfat. ad Catechum. n. v. p. 7.

out its running up in some way into this question. And exorcism, I do not say, explains it, but contains the answer to it which was given by the Catholic Church, delivering that answer from the lips of Almighty God.

That there are such things in the world as pleasure and pain, good and evil, happiness and misery, virtue and vice, creation and destruction, improvement and decay; that, in fact, the whole system of the world is built on the antithesis or contrast of these two principles, we all know. What are Ethics, but rules for avoiding evil? what education, but a process of raising men from evil to good? But how the world came to be framed upon these two principles, and not upon one, has been the perplexity of human reason ever since it first began to work. That we are formed to like and to follow the one class of things, to dislike and fly from the other, is also evident. And if we had framed a world (so we idly dare to think), we should have excluded all evil; and therefore we cannot understand why an all-wise and almighty Creator has admitted it.

It would be idle to enumerate all the modes by which ethical writers, while they acknowledged the phenomenon, have endeavoured to account for it; that is, to reduce it under some acknowledged laws of their own experience. Some have ventured to attribute the creation of the world to two distinct beings, the one good, and the other evil. Of these, some. as the Manichees, have made these two co-equal and co-eternal. Others, as the Oriental sects, of more acute understandings, being compelled to trace up all things to some ONE cause, acknowledge a Supreme Being, the Author of good, at the head of all things, before whom the evil power will be finally subdued; but why it is permitted to exist at

present, they do not explain. Others, as Plato, have conceived that the matter out of which the universe was made was inherently of a vicious and intractable nature. Others, as the Gnostics, that the creation is the work of an inferior angel, not of the supreme God. Others, as the Stoics, and many modern Englishmen, have perceived that this in no way removes the difficulty; for what a supreme authority permits in an inferior agent must be considered as emanating from itself. They have therefore denied the existence of evil; have made it all conducive to good; have imagined a vast system of operations, of which we can only see a part, but which, if we could see the whole, would lose all appearance of disorder, and confusion, and evil; just as a masterly picture, which close to the eye appears a chaos of rude colour, when seen at a proper distance falls into shape and beauty. Others, again, have thought it best to escape from the difficulty of reconciling the existence of evil in creation with the existence of an all-wise and all-good Creator, by practically denying the existence of such a Creator at all; among these were the Epicureans. Fate, Chance, Necessity, or a Deity indifferent to man, or pure atheism, have been their refuge. And some few have even dared to overlook the existence of good in the world, and blasphemously imagined the supreme God himself to be a being delighting in evil.

That there is, then, evil in the world—moral evil, sin and punishment, as well as suffering and decay—all ethical schools are agreed; even those which affect to deny it, by asserting its ultimate tendency to be good. Imperfection in the parts of a system may be necessary to the perfection of the whole, as Pope, and Shaftesbury, and archbishop King suppose; but it is still imperfection, still evil, though balanced by greater good. It is something

which requires explanation or apology: and this is enough.

But it is, moreover, a *Power;* something which domineers over us, from which it is most hard, in many cases impossible, to escape; which meets us when we do not expect it; which lies in wait for us secretly; whose work is to destroy us; from which our nature shrinks with dread and loathing; of which we may become the slaves, but cannot by any effort make ourselves the friends, so as to acquiesce and take pleasure in it. And at times we make an ineffectual struggle; raise up a weak and paralysed arm against it, or rather fight convulsively without aim or purpose. But it overpowers us with ease; and every time we fall, we are less able to rise, until we are finally mastered, and then comes death. So it is with the evil of the body, sickness and pain. So it is with the evil of the soul, temptation and sin. So it is with the evil of the mind, ignorance and error. So it is with the evil of the outward world,—the blight, the drought, the famine, the whirlwind, the torrent, the tempest, the pestilence, the decay of age, the ravages of violence, the preying of one thing on another in a "creation made subject to vanity" (Rom. viii. 20). And so it is with the evil of societies,—lawlessness, abuse of power, injustice, selfishness, mutability, the loss of principles, invasion, treachery, accumulation of wealth, indulgence in luxuries, which are the ruin of man in states. In every case there is a power which is not man's, which is man's enemy, which man may well dread, which he must battle with, to which he is a slave, from which, within the range of his senses, he has none to deliver him.

And this Power is not a mere mechanical action —it is a *Spirit and a Person*—a Spirit, for we cannot see it, except in its effects, as we cannot see the

mind which guides the body, nor the life which organises the tree, nor the ruling principle which governs the nation, nor God, who governs the world; and yet we know them to exist, because there are effects around us which could not proceed except from a power exterior to and above them.

But the peculiarity of the Catholic doctrine regarding this Power of evil is its *personality*. Of personality, you, the young reader, may not have at present any distinct notion. But I will endeavour to explain it at once, because it occupies a most important place,—it is almost the corner-stone in the science of Ethics.

The whole universe, then, is divided into two classes—*persons and things*. All bad systems of religion, of morals, of politics, of art, endeavour to convert every thing into either persons without things, or things without persons. The Catholic doctrine does, what I have told you all true systems will do. It believes both in persons and in things, distinguishing without dividing, and combining without confusing them. Let us explain it more clearly. What is the difference between a stone and a worm; a slave and a servant; a hammer or saw, and a slave? The stone is *a thing;* the worm, in some sense, *a person,*—the slave, in one sense, *a thing;* the servant *a person,*—the saw, *a thing;* the slave, as compared with it, *a person*. Now, think what a difference exists in our mode of viewing and dealing with these two classes. You tread on a stone, break it in fragments, and no one charges you with an immoral act. But tread on a worm, and it becomes cruelty. Where slavery exists in its fullest extent, and the slave is considered as a *thing*—as the property of his master, or, as Aristotle calls him,[1]

[1] Polit. lib. i. c. 1.

a living machine, ἔμψυχον ὄργανον—a master may sell, scourge, maim, kill him, with the same indifference and impunity that he would crush and throw away a reed. Where a hammer or a saw is *a thing*, and no *person* is connected with it but yourself, you may do with it as you choose. But the moment a *person* comes into view, whose property it is, your treatment of it may become theft, or wrong, and you will be punished for it. In one word, all moral affections, all notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice, of duties, and rights, and laws, and lawgivers, depend on our relation to persons, and not to things. Turn a *thing* into a *person*, as when you shew us that what we believed to be a wax image is a living being, and it is no longer

> "Superstition, that
> We kneel, and then implore her blessing."[1]

Turn a *person* into a *thing*, as when a popish image is broken up, and its movement proved to be mechanical, and the adoration is gone. Now, wherein does this difference consist? I answer, then, that whatever derives its powers of motion from without, from some other being, is a thing. Whatever possesses a spontaneous action within itself, is a person, or, as Aristotle defines it, an ἀρχὴ πράξεως.[2] And man is so formed, that his thoughts and affections cannot rest on any thing short of the seeming cause and original source of effects which he admires. Neither will any thing else excite his anger, or hatred, or opposition, against that which is evil. A carrier is the means of conveying to me a valuable present. I have no gratitude to him. He is but an instrument; an unthinking means—*a thing*. All my thoughts are concentred on the donor. He also

[1] Winter's Tale, act v. sc. 3.
[2] Nicho. Eth. lib. iii.

was stimulated by some other person. He sent the gift against his own will. My thoughts pass on from him to his adviser. It comes to me through a special messenger connected with the donor, and I am grateful to the messenger as representing the donor himself, or as exhibiting sympathy with his feelings, or as a voluntary agent. An executioner is appointed to put a criminal to death. The unhappy offender feels no resentment against him, nor against the judge, nor against the king, nor against the witnesses, who were compelled to depose against him. They were constrained by other powers—did not act spontaneously—are, in his eyes, but *things*. On one person only his indignation is directed, who, without any compulsion, betrayed him spontaneously. And it is to be observed, that, on the one hand, strong feeling, of whatever kind, transmutes things into persons—regards them, that is, as originating, instead of mechanical agents. Poetry and passion are full of personifications: the trees, the winds, the rocks, the waters, all seem to sympathise with deep grief or violent joy. Love will endow almost with thought and feeling the merest relic of a favourite object. It puts life, and action, and spontaneity into every thing. It is grateful to secondary causes — reverences subordinate instruments — creates associations with dead material works, as with animated beings. Once rouse the human mind, and it fills and impregnates a whole universe of matter with a spirit like its own,—

> Totosque infusa per artus
> Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.[1]

Whereas the opposite working of a cold rationalising scepticism sucks out, even from things that have

[1] Virgil. Æn.

life, their very breath and soul. The universe becomes chance atoms. Animals are brute machines; man's body is a study of anatomy; man's intellect a mill for grinding logic; man's heart passive before impulse, as a leaf before the wind; man's soul an empty mirror, lying helpless, to be defiled by every impression of the senses.

It may be the sign of a fanciful excited spirit to personify every thing; but it is the sign of a far worse spirit to personify nothing. Wherever you find a tendency to deny spontaneity, unless with proper qualifications, distrust the theory:

"Hic niger est; hunc tu, Romane, caveto."

Superstition, once more, may be bad, but unbelief and materialism are infinitely worse.

And thus reject at once the miserable rationalism of the day, which, as it converts the agency of God into nature, or necessity, or chance, or mechanism, so also turns the power of evil into a defect in the machinery of the world, or a contrivance in the discipline of God, or a quality in the essence of matter, or a necessary ingredient in a system made up of subordinate parts, or a disease in man's own mind, or a brute necessity against which it is vain to struggle. These are the theories which you will meet in modern speculations on the origin of evil. But *the Power of Evil is a Person.* It is seen acting in opposition to God, who is the Maker and the Lord of the world. It corrupts what he made perfect, thwarts what he designs, pollutes what he made pure, resists what he commands, lays plots for his creatures, "sows tares among his harvest," "devours his flock," mars the fair work of his creation; and all this in the face and in defiance of laws, and authority, and counteracting influences, established by the Author of good. Recollect this. Recollect

that there is a Power of good in the world, in the hand which has contrived so many encouragements to virtue, so many remonstrances of conscience, so many witnesses against vice, so much beauty, so much wisdom, in the mechanism of the universe; and that this good Power recognises the evil Power, not as a servant ministering to its own purpose, but as an independent agent arrayed and contending against it as an enemy—that God plans remedies against its mischiefs, raises warnings against its aggressions, binds men by most solemn obligations to fight against it, anticipates, counterworks, rebukes, chastises, deals with it in all points as with a foe. And then ask if it be safe for us to take another view of its nature, a view the very reverse of that which is taken by God.

If two bodies of soldiers were drawn up against each other, how would you know that the battle was real; that two *persons*, two independent agents, were contending, and not one only employing the other, as a machine, for its own will and purpose? —when there was real bloodshed, real fear, real thoughtful deliberation on each side. And is there real bloodshed in the world? Did our Saviour shed tears over his creation? Did he die himself, that he may triumph over evil? Does he warn us to die also, lest we should be dragged down into torment? Or, let us use another and more familiar illustration. Place two chess-players before us —let one, in reality, play the whole game, using the other only as a seeming antagonist, overruling his movements, allowing him no independent spontaneous action; and this seeming antagonist will lose his personality at once. He will sink down into an automaton—a thing. And how would you ascertain this? By seeing the victory always follow on one side—by finding that the superior exhibited no signs of fear, took no pains to frame his own move-

ments, or framed them always in one regular undeviating plan, as if with the knowledge that they could be met by only one course of opposition—that he made no remonstrances—that he never failed in his designs—that he treated his antagonist as a child. If we saw this, we should say that the battle was a delusion—the enemy a sham. But do we find this in the world? Does God, the Author of good, so deal with the author of evil? Is there no failure in his designs of good? Are there no symptoms of precaution? Does He warn us against evil? Are the organised plans of good deeply laid, artfully concerted, as against a most powerful adversary? What is the Catholic Church? What is the whole array of Christian influences, of Christian teaching, of Christian facts? Even in the world of matter, look to that infinite array of concerted means, of contrivances, of precautions against evil, of remedies when evil has been done; an array so full of the thought of resistance to some counteracting power, that bishop Butler almost describes it as a scheme of mercy and compassion, rather than of benevolence,—and then think if there is not a real living Agent in the world, with power, and will, and thought, and reason,—*a Person*, who is the author of evil.

And to those whose ears have been filled with the soft, easy, indulgent doctrines of the present day, which would put out of sight all the misery, and sin, and present pain, and future torment of the world, —just as in our cities it throws back the hovels of the poor, and the dens of vice, into dark holes and alleys, that the eye may see nothing but palaces,—this will sound like Manicheism. It will be called an Eastern fancy, the dream of a melancholy and heated fanaticism. But Manicheism itself were almost better—it were a less insult to Almighty God,

less enervating in its influence upon man, less a tampering with the express voice of revelation, less fatal in its final ruin, than the delusion of our modern civilization, which denies "a devil and a hell." "I say unto you," says Chrysostom, "talk of hell, and think of hell," and therefore of him who is its master. Believe in the personality of an evil spirit; and the whole world, and the whole of life, will take a different colour; fearful indeed, anxious, full of sorrow for the past, of earnest watching for the future; but there will be energy, and forethought, and seriousness, and self-denial, and these will make the man. And there will be hope and comfort also.

How the existence of such a personality is to be reconciled with the omnipotence of an all-good Creator, we are not called on to explain. Little is told us by revelation. If a man woke up in the night, and found himself in conflict with a murderer, it would be no time to speculate on the mode by which he obtained entrance into the house. If a child were placed by his parent in the water, in order to teach him to swim, the parent would say little of his own object, but much on the danger of drowning, and on the means of escape. And the child would not resolve on sinking to the bottom without a struggle, because he could not reconcile his danger with the usual benevolence of the being who exposed him to it. One thing indeed is told us with sufficient clearness to obviate all practical difficulty,—the supremacy of God; not only his ultimate supremacy, in that "new heaven and new earth," which shall be created when the "first heaven and the first earth shall have passed away" (Rev. xxi. 1),—but his present supremacy, even in this antecedent state of conflict, overruling "all things for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. viii. 28); that is, to all

sincere and baptised members of his Church. And with this it will be wise to rest content. Of the facts themselves we are sure. Of the duties following on these facts there can be no doubt. How they are to be reconciled together, may be a matter of curiosity; but the curiosity can only end in idle speculation, or something worse. Here again, as in so many other instances, the true wisdom lies in holding two contrary principles, as practical counterbalances of each other, without attempting to give them unity, and absorb one in the other; except indeed by that simple process of faith, which enables us to believe equally in both facts on the *one* word of *one* revelation from God. Let others endeavour to reduce into one the two agencies at present working in the world — both into good, or both into evil. On the faith of the Catholic Church declaring the truth from God, we will hold them both. Especially we will hold, and realise, and act upon the true, unfigurative, literal personality of a Spirit of evil; tempting man, lying in wait for him, triumphing over him, hating him, "going about daily, seeking whom he may devour." On this main fact must rest the foundation of all Christian Ethics. With this the ancient Church began its Christian education. Her first thought was, to stand before the Evil one as his appointed antagonist, to recognise his power over man, and her own power, as God's delegate, over Satan and his angels; and to adjure him, as Christ did of old, to come out of the victim whom he possessed.

For in the ceremony of exorcism, this fact of "possession" was implied also. The Catholic Church never contemplated man in his natural state—as bad ethical systems contemplate him,—as if he were a free, independent agent, capable of battling with the evil one, and overcoming him; or even as in no

way exposed to his attack. She speaks of him in his original condition as a prisoner, as a slave—"as poor, to whom good tidings must be preached—as one broken-hearted, who is to be healed—as a captive, who is to be delivered—as one blind, who must recover his sight—as one bruised, who is to be set at liberty" (Luke iv. 18; Isaiah lxi. 1). This is the uniform, constantly recurring language of the Church. It has been the uniform language of all *deep* philosophy, of whatever school. All schools approaching to truth have recognised the fact, that man is formed of two principles—a *mind*, or thinking being within, which, in the language of Aristotle, is the individual man, the ἕκαστος—the "I," the "You," the "He;"—and *something without*, which is no part of himself, but which confines, thwarts, binds him down, acts upon him, stands over him, just as the limits of the mould stand over the molten metal which is poured into it, and by resistance form it into shape. It is what the German philosophy understands by the "ego" and "non ego;" and the French Eclecticism by the "moi" and "non moi,"—the something which we feel to be ourselves; and that which we feel to be not ourselves, to be something out of and beyond us. And no thought whatever—no act—no, not even consciousness of our own existence, can take place without a perception of these two elements in it. And against this external influence, as against the bars of a prison, the mind is constantly struggling, longing to become its master, to rule instead of obeying it. Every cry for freedom, whether it rises from a miserable criminal groaning over his captivity to sin; or an impatient child rebelling against the compulsion of its parent; or a lawless sensualist striving to overpower the commandments of his conscience and the Church; or a philosopher, like Plato, sighing over

the tyranny of his senses, and striving to escape to some high region of thought, where he may command and master truth, instead of being tossed about by every impulse of the body;—whether it be the clamour of self-willed rationalism, disdaining the restraints of authority; or the cry of a rebellious nation rising in arms against its laws; or the stern pride of Stoicism asserting its independence of outward things; or the yearnings of the Eastern mystic to be released from this dungeon of existence, and absorbed in the essence of the Deity; or the ravings of fanatical enthusiasm, setting all forms and laws at defiance; or the contented succumbing of self-indulgence in a doctrine of chance or necessity, that it may be released from the duty of a conflict; or the degraded materialism of Locke, which made man the slave of his senses rather than acknowledge his subjection to the Church,—in all alike, there is the cry for freedom; and every cry for freedom is an acknowledgment of slavery; and every thing which enslaves must, to him that is enslaved, seem evil. And thus the Catholic Church, in asserting the doctrine of "possession," only asserted a fact, on which the whole movement of thought and action in the world has proceeded from its creation. The whole has been a struggle for freedom—an effort to escape from some restraint, to subject outward circumstances to the inner man, or the inner man to outward circumstances; so that there may be no more battle, no more consciousness of servitude.

And in this struggle who has succeeded? Who in this life has ever attained to liberty, and with liberty to that which follows it—rest, quiet, contentedness, power, supremacy over all things? Who among heathens professed that he had found it? Who even of Christians has done more than make some approach to it, not by his own might, but in the

name of another? The triumph of heathen philosophy was ἕξις: to "have," to "hold as inalienable property," to be "master of," our feelings, actions, principles, so that they should remain firm and unshaken, and wholly in our own power, without dependence on the world without. It was to "possess," instead of being "possessed;" to be master, instead of slave. To be "possessed," and thus at the mercy of a power external to ourselves, was the great sin and great misery of heathenism. And so with the apostle: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" (Rom. vii. 18.)

And in regarding as the action and as the dominion of the evil spirit all that which does thus seem to possess, master, hem us in—our senses, our flesh, the lusts of the eye, the pride of life, the fetters and chains of brute force, the innumerable influences of desire, passion, ignorance, blindness, and sin, to which we feel ourselves subjected from our birth,—the Church only draws a distinction, on which bad moralists long since have founded a claim to exemption from responsibility. They say, and they say rightly, that the external influences to which we are subjected, are of two kinds. One class allow of no choice. They act like tyrants, by *compulsion, forcing* us to do this, and abstain from that, whether we will or no. Such are the operations of the senses, which convey impressions to the mind, without allowing it to choose. It can do nothing but reject them. Such are the temptations of the flesh, which come to us before we are aware of them. Such are the powers of man, which make

slaves of our body. Such are the demoniacal possessions recorded in Scripture, in which the will had no part. But the other class of external influences never act with this overbearing compulsion. They stand aloof, like Wisdom crying in the streets (Prov. i. 20),—warning, admonishing, encouraging, inviting men "to come to them," and obey them, but never forcing compliance. This is the characteristic distinction between external influences of evil, and those of good. Whenever we obey the good, we "obey from the heart," as well as with the body. We give ourselves up to them, and feel that we do so *of ourselves*, with gladness, without reproach or remonstrance from within, with an exercise of power, and a consciousness of freedom. Hence goodness, which is obedience to God, is essentially a service of freedom, an act of power, an enjoyment of the heart, even when it is preceded by a struggle against evil. And vice, which is servitude to evil, is always servitude—always reluctant, remorseful, wavering, impatient, fretful, and discontented. No man feels that he is "possessed" by good, as a slave is possessed by a master. No one "possesses" evil, or feels that he is its master, even when he follows it most greedily. He feels that he is possessed by it.

And thus, that man at his birth is possessed by a power above him; that this power is evil; that it must be exorcised and driven out, and man made free from its dominion,—is the uniform declaration both of the Gospel and of philosophy. But the Gospel adds something more. It asserts that in this power of evil, within whose grasp we are born, there is a person, as well as a thing. It constitutes the Church the minister of God, to release man from his chains. And this power was asserted by the ancient Church, when, before the infant was baptised, it was solemnly

subjected to exorcism. It is recognised by our own branch of the Catholic Church, when it speaks of children unbaptised as "children of wrath"—when it calls on them to "renounce the devil," as a person to whom they were by birth enthralled—when it receives them into the "ark of Christ's Church," as into a state of salvation, and prays that the "old Adam may be buried, and all carnal affections die in them," as if till then these were alive, and holding them in subjection and slavery.

CHAPTER XIII.

When man, then, is born into the world, he finds himself in contact with a power which is no part of himself—placed as it were in a prison—fettered as it were with chains—faced by an antagonist with whom he has to fight a battle—subjected to an imperious master. He cannot become conscious of his own existence, without becoming conscious of the existence of this power also. It is this fact—I repeat it once more—which is intended by the words so common in modern philosophy, both of Germany and France, the "ego" and "non ego." It is recognised by the Church as well. And however abstruse the problem may sound when thus stated abstractedly, practically we must each be familiar with it, otherwise it cannot be true. For the highest axioms of Ethics are only generalised expressions of phenomena common to *all* human minds. The peasant acts in every act upon the sense of an "ego" and a "non ego"—of something which is himself, and something which is not himself; each of them within the range of his consciousness,—just as much as the profoundest metaphysician.

Let us realise the fact fully; for in Christian, as in all Ethics, every thing depends on it. I see, then; but in the act of seeing, I must see some object, and that object must be conceived as distinct from the mind which sees it. I hear; but I must hear a sound, which sound is no part of the mind, for it vanishes, and the mind remains. I touch; but there is something which is touched, something which resists my hand—solid—which I cannot pass—which is no part

of myself, otherwise it could not resist, it would be in my power. I move; but without a fulcrum or basis which is fixed and immovable by me, motion is as impossible, as for a man to walk on the yielding water. I feel desire; but it must be for an object, as for something out of me, or I should possess it already. I hope, fear, love, hate, admire, despise, teach, obey, sympathise, censure; but in each case there must be an object external to me, for every feeling within necessarily implies some exciting cause without. I think, contemplate, examine, analyse, prove, refute, assent to, disbelieve; but in each, and in every other act of the understanding, there must be not only a mind reasoning, but something distinct from it, on which it reasons. And thus in the three divisions of human nature, sensation, appetite, and intellect,—or, to use the Greek words as given by Aristotle, αἴσθησις, ὄρεξις, and νοῦς,—no act can take place without implying two things to make up the idea—something within the individual, and something without. Here also is exemplified the fact before asserted, that all things in the present world are made up of at least two elements; or, to use a more formal statement, that dualism is the law of creation.

Now what I wish to shew is, that in all cases this external element, this something which is not ourselves, acts to the internal element, or to that which we call ourselves, as a *law*, a resisting power, which is superior to it, is fixed, unalterable, to which we must conform; that, in fact, the very perfection of our senses, of our feelings, and of our reason, consists in this conformity or subjection. And if this be so, then we shall reach another conclusion, that in no circumstances whatever can man be released from it—in no circumstances whatever can he be without such a law, free from such re-

straint—that liberty, if by liberty be meant the absence of external control, is not only no good, but, looking to the nature of man, is an impossibility. And then we shall be prepared to hear the great truth of Christianity. It calls us slaves by birth; but it does not profess to set us free, but only to make us servants to another master. It says nothing of freedom, rights, independence, power; its whole language is *obedience, duty, dependence, weakness.* And the ancient Church had its form in which this great truth was enunciated, in the rite of baptism.

When, then, the person whose education the Church was undertaking was brought to be baptised, he was first, either in his own person, or in his sponsors, placed towards the west, barefooted and stripped of his outer garments—his hands stretched out, as if pushing an enemy from him—his head averted—and thrice he was bidden to spit in the face of Satan, as a form of abhorrence and rejection, and thrice to renounce him and all his works. And then he was turned to the east—his eyes lifted up to heaven—his hands stretched out in prayer—and he was called on to make a solemn profession of entering into the service of another master, Christ. Ἀποτάσσῃ τῷ Σατανᾷ; *Abrenuntiasne Satanæ?* Συντάσσῃ τῷ Χριστῷ; *Adhæresne Christo?*[1]

I will not stop to ask, if such a form as this,

[1] See the account given in Bingham, Ecclesiast. Antiquit. book xi. c. viii., with the references to Tertullian, the Apostolical Constitutions, Cyprian, Ambrose, Jerome, Cyril, Gregory Nazianzen, Dionysius the Areopagite, Basil, Augustin, &c. &c.; who all agree in the account of the ceremony. See also the form in the Greek Euchologium, which is perhaps one of the most striking portions of the liturgy of the Eastern Church. Observe also that the word τάσσω is used with an especial reference to a soldier placing himself under the orders of a general; and that the highest perfection, especially of an ancient soldier, was implicit, unhesitating, almost unreasoning

strange as it may sound to us, is reconcilable with a disbelief in the personality of a spirit of evil. "You entered into the baptistery," says Cyril[1]—"you stood turned to the west, and heard the order to stretch forth your hand, and you renounced Satan (ἀπετάττεσθε) as present at the spot,—ὡς παρόντι." "We turn to the west," says Jerome,[2] "renouncing him whose dwelling is in the west,—qui in occidente est." They gave to him not only a personal agency, but a local habitation, as in a place of darkness.

But consider if this principle of subjection to a master, though another and a better master than him under whose dominion we are born, does not run through Christianity. The apostles do not boast of their freedom, do not even call themselves *servants;* they call themselves the *slaves* (δοῦλοι) of Christ.[3] Christ does not bid the heavy-laden shake off a yoke, but take one upon them. Our Church does not speak of freedom as the great blessing of God, but of a *service* which is perfect freedom. The very words "redemption," "purchased," imply that we are become the property of Him who purchased us. Again, Christ does not admit the alternative as possible, that we should serve no master —he says only, that we can serve but one. And

obedience. Observe also, that the triple renunciation was probably a symbol retained from the old form used in the emancipation of a slave (Vicecomes. de Rit. Bapt., lib. ii. c. xx. p. 311). And then observe how our own liturgy, though it does not employ the form of the actions, preserves precisely the same truths in its form of words; where the child is made to promise not only "to renounce the devil," but also to "obediently keep God's commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of his life" (Baptismal Service).

[1] Catech. Mystag. i. n. 11, p. 278.

[2] In Amos. vi. 14.

[3] See Rom. i. 1; Philip. i. 1; Tit 11; James i. 1; 2 Pet. i. 1; Jude 11.

St. Paul's words are too precise to be passed over. "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness[1] unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments (ὅπλα) of righteousness unto God. . . . Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. vi. 15).[2] Liberty, therefore, and freedom, are no watchwords of Christianity; and any system in which they are watchwords you may be sure is false.

I said, then, that every act of the human mind implied the recognition of an external world distinct from it. I now say, that this external world stands to it as a law, as a power which it must obey, which it never fails to obey without running into folly or vice.

Take, in the first place, the senses. I am walking in a fog. There is a tree before me, its outline indistinct. I imagine it to be a house; that is, I frame in my mind an image or idea which does not coincide with the real object before me. I am in error. I lose my way at night. A light plays before me. I imagine it to be a lantern; that is, instead of framing a conception of it as it *really* exists, I put together certain other notions, act upon them, and am led into a quagmire. I am standing on the edge of a precipice. I imagine that it is ten feet off; that is, I conceive the distance between me and it to be so much: I have made a mistake, step forward, and break my neck. A chemist takes some white crystals out of a glass bottle. He frames a conception of their nature, as if they were a very useful medicine, Epsom salts. He has made a mis-

[1] The original is ὅπλα,—make yourselves the heavy-armed soldiers, the body-guard, as it were, of sin, sworn to follow your commander without will of your own.

[2] The whole passage should be consulted.

take; that is, he has not conformed the idea in his mind to the external nature of the substance, as it exists quite independent of his fancies; and the person to whom he administers it is poisoned with oxalic acid. A deaf person half-hears certain words. Instead of conforming his notion of them exactly to the real sounds as they were uttered, he makes a wrong guess, repeats it, and thus propagates a lie. A poet, to be a poet, must imitate. Can he make the character, the scenery, the incidents which he narrates, exactly conformable to some standard, either the standard of real life, or a standard of a more exalted kind, such as God suggests to us in the nobler works of his creation? If he cannot, his imitation is worthless.[1] A young man sees a beautiful woman. Instead of examining her character, ascertaining what she really is, he suffers his imagination to run wild, fancies her an angel, acts upon his fancy, marries her, and is made wretched for life. A general miscalculates the enemy's force, the number of his own troops, the position which they occupy. He does not bring his notions into conformity with the external reality, and he is defeated. A statesman makes a law. He supposes that it will act in such a way, that it contains such and such elements of good, that it is conformable to the law of policy or the law of God: it turns out that he has failed to make it so conformable, and the law proves a national curse. The miser fancies that money is an object which can make him happy; the ambitious man, that honour and power are blessings; the sensualist, that he can satisfy his thirst by indulgence in pleasures. Each is disappointed—each led into sin. Why? Because their concep-

[1] Those who can study Greek literature will see this question discussed in two dialogues of Plato, the Theætetus and the Philetus, and in the last book of the Republic.

tions do not accord with the reality. The workings of the inner man have not been forced into coincidence with the stern unalterable standard of the external world.

Will these hints suffice to lead you on (it is all that I propose) to trace in innumerable other instances, that our excellence uniformly consists in reducing our ideas, our feelings, and our actions, into agreement with a standard without—that wherever there is a want of such agreement, there is evil—and that the standard remains fixed;—*we* ourselves are to be changed. Nothing, we know, is good, unless it be *true* and *right*. But right means ruled; a line made to coincide with another line—not crooked—not diverging from it. And true also means that which accords with some rule or measure; false is that which is at variance with it. A true note in music is that which accords with the note fixed by the composer. A false step is one which does not adapt itself to the measure of the ground which we tread, or to the rhythm to which we are walking. A true copy is that which faithfully represents the original. A false statement is one which differs from the reality of fact. Look to the perfection of a Christian. God has given him external laws for his *belief*, in *the creeds*. When his faith agrees with them, then it is good. God has also given him external laws for his *feelings*—taught him how to frame his wishes, by putting into his mouth the *Lord's Prayer*. When his heart can really feel what his lips have uttered, his heart is in a sound state. And the same God has also given external laws for his *actions* in the *Ten Commandments*. And it is not till we violate them that our acts are bad—are wrong; not till we obey them as God's laws, that our acts are right.

This was what Plato meant by saying, that the

perfection of man consisted in conforming himself to certain *forms*, or ἰδέαι, laid down for him by his Creator. It was what the Stoics meant, when they said that man, to be free, must adapt himself to the laws of nature; must make his thoughts, and feelings, and actions, coincide with the rules of Providence. It is what Bacon meant, when he complained that men formed notions and theories without looking to things as they are. It is what all philosophers mean, when they say that *truth* should be our object—that we should understand the *real nature* of things—form right views—not be fanciful, enthusiastic, mystical, ignorant, mistaken,—all of which imply the having in our mind notions of outward things which do not fairly and accurately exhibit the real nature of those things.

Observe, moreover, that for one thing to be the measure or standard of another, it must be *fixed*, permanent. Can you measure the distance you have sailed at sea by a sea-weed floating with the tide? Can you tell if a line is straight, when the ruler bends as it is applied? Can you discern if an object in a mist is square or round, when the fog is rolling past, and its outline is perpetually shifting? Will you say if a sum is right, or corresponds with a certain amount, when the items are altered as you calculate? Can you act in any way as a reasonable being, without having some *end* in view? And if that end is variable, can you frame your means so as to attain it? You steer a vessel—how? By looking not to any part of the vessel which is in motion, but to the fixed stars which are above it. You try to please a friend; you concert measures for it; his taste changes; they are all futile. You plan schemes of happiness. I tell you that you will die before they are completed. The end is gone, and with it your schemes. Can you walk if the

ground is not firm—see if the object is not fixed—hear if the sound comes only in fits and starts, not uniformly and permanently? Will you believe a tale in which no two reporters agree? Will you value a capricious, mutable, fickle mind? Can you obey a law, which is altered while you are obeying it? Can you frame your conduct to suit any relations in life—those of parent, or child, or master, or servant, or subject, or king—unless those relations are fixed? *Fixedness therefore, and permanence, is essential in that which is to serve as a rule* for your actions, a measure for your affections, a standard for your belief. If there be nothing in the world fixed and permanent, as a bad sophistical school of morals would persuade you—if our senses constantly deceive us—if the laws of nature are always shifting—if right and wrong, vice and virtue, are mere fancies and delusions, varying with the tastes and feelings of every individual at every moment,—then you cannot act at all. You have no business in the world. Add this to the other symptoms of a false philosophy. When a man talks to you of *mutable principles* of virtue, of goodness depending *on taste*, of laws *varying with circumstances*, of new principles successively generated, of a change in the present times which has superseded former rules, of new truths in theology, of progressive developments of Christianity, by which what is past shall be repeatedly obliterated to make room for that which is to come,—in each of these speculations you may discern the mark of "*mutability;*" and mutability was never impressed on any theory on the right side of that line which separates the good from the bad. On the contrary, wherever you see a mind struggling for permanence, consistency, durability, laying a stress on fixed habits, valuing fixed rules, maintaining unaltered hereditary insti-

tutions, rebuking caprice, despising mere opinions, laying deep the foundations of belief in unalterable eternal principles, recognising something which never changes in the midst of all the vicissitudes of human circumstances, and the fancies of the human heart,—there you may discern one element at least of truth, one symptom of a great and noble mind. The system is probably good.

But observe one thing more. Thought, feeling, sensation in man, we found necessarily implied the perception of two elements, the internal and external, the "ego" and "non ego." And our perfection consists in conforming them to each other; and for this purpose one must be a standard, and to be a standard, it must be fixed. But this fixedness cannot be found in the element of ourselves. It is only the outer world which is thus regular, durable, invariable. The laws of the world without do not change. It surrounds us with walls which we cannot pierce through. It fetters us with chains which we cannot break. It fills our senses with realities, which remain when our senses are averted, are removed by distance, are paralysed, are destroyed. There is the oak under which so many generations have rested. There is the tomb in which family after family have been laid down to rest. There stands the home, with all its scenes, the same whether we are absent or present. There shines the sun above us, whether we smile or weep, live or die, still looking gladly on the world, still coming forth from its chamber, still rejoicing to run its race, whether we behold it or not. The seasons come and go, whether we listen or not to their voice of warning. The secret agencies of nature do their bidding, whether or no we understand them. God's prophets speak, and speak realities, and their words will come to pass, whether we will hear, or whether we will for-

bear. God's moral laws are fixed and changeless, though to-day we listen to them with awe, and to-morrow turn away in contempt. God's truths are sure and eternal, though never uttered in the world, when uttered heard only by a few, by many of those few misunderstood, by none comprehended as they should be. And God's promises, and threatenings, and punishments, all stand firm, though we are blind, or careless, or rebellious. Even the material world, fixed as it is to us, is transitory and perishable compared with the only truth, the being and the attributes of God. "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thine hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail" (Heb. i. 10; Psalm cii. 25). But man's mind is even more mutable than the earth, which shall pass away. It is a mirror, which every passing object clouds and colours with its own hues. It is in restless, heaving motion; thought after thought, image after image flit across it, and none remain. It wearies, and sleeps, and wakes again, and labours and wearies once more; and with every variation, its taste and appetites, and sentiments, and opinions, and belief vary also. No man is in the evening what he was in the morning. No man can answer against some blot in the purity of his heart, some flaw to be discovered in his reasoning, some addition to his knowledge, some new discernment of relations, some fresh item in his calculation, which may alter the whole balance, and make him at one hour a very different man from what he was in the hour before. He will, indeed, search for fixedness *in himself.* He will lay down laws for his moral conduct; erect

his own opinions into a standard of truth; act upon his own sensations, uncorrected and unexamined as they are, with as much confidence in their accuracy as if they were realities. The madman sits in his cell, calling his chains a royal robe, his bed of straw a throne, his prison a palace; and shaping all his words, and feelings, and actions, into rigid conformity with this belief, as if it were a fact. A hypochondriac believes himself dead. He gives orders for his funeral; complains that he is not buried; insists that his family should put on mourning, with as much positiveness as if he were not alive. An aëronaut makes a calculation of the weight of his body, the law of gravitation, the strength of his balloon. On the faith of this he mounts up into the air. But, because his belief has rested, not on realities, but opinions, he falls headlong to the ground. A philosopher frames a theory, which is to make men good by properly shaping the organs of the scull. No such process will make them good. But he holds fast his theory; acts upon it just as vigorously as a Christian would act on his belief, that the Church alone, with its sacraments and ordinances, could save mankind. In all these cases, the fault is, not that man acts without reference to an external reality, but that he believes his own fancies and opinions, untried as they are, to be external realities. He mistakes, to use the terms so common in Greek philosophy, and especially in Plato, δόξαι and φαντασίαι for τὰ ὄντα, that is, for real positive truths, as they exist wholly independent of his conceptions of them.

But the point now to be observed is this. Although *for a time* men can and will thus rest with certainty on this unsound ground, and mere human fancies will appear solid realities for a moment, the solidity cannot last; the belief will be overthrown

as soon as we begin to act upon them. Like the fragile glass and the hard stone bottles swimming down the stream together, at the first collision the glass will break. You think the ice strong enough to bear you; venture on it, and you fall in. You think sin will make you happy; taste it, and you will think so no more. And thus actions, and theories, and plans of life, built upon any other foundation than real external truth, sooner or later must crumble to pieces. Landmarks fixed only by human reason must disappear. There is nothing stable in the individual man alone, in the "ego," as there is in the "non ego." Trace it in private life. See the miser fixing for himself some limit to the accumulation of his wealth; when he reaches it, is he contented? See an author working at a book which is to complete his labours; when it is finished, he begins another. See a nation escaped from the restraint of positive law, and trusted to its own imagination; it lays down other laws of its own, but will they remain unchanged? How many French constitutions followed one another, like dreams, the moment the door was opened to the fancies of political speculators! How many improvements in reform started up to sweep away the final Reform-Bill, when once Englishmen had been taught to look for good to their own inventions, not to the institutions of their ancestors! So also see a rationalist taking as his standard of revealed truth, not the external positive testimony of the Catholic Church, but his own notion of its internal probability; receiving perhaps at first all the essential doctrines of Christianity as true, but on the ground of his own opinion: will his creed remain fixed? or will he, as in the case of so many well-known men—Doddridge, Locke, Milton, and numberless others—gradually drop doctrine after doctrine, and

alter his faith till it becomes a nothing? What school of philosophy founded on human reason, what institution left unguarded by external authority, ever maintained its ground against innovation? Fixedness, therefore, is not to be found by man in the world within himself. And yet without fixedness somewhere, some ground on which to rest, some point by which to measure and direct his course, some object on which his eye may dwell calmly and immovably, man cannot live. Where is he to obtain it? *In a world without him.* On this he must anchor his belief; here he must fix his resting-place; in this he must find his laws; in this he must make his immortality.

And thus the Church comes before man,—weak, fickle, doubtful, capricious man, the slave of every impulse, "tossed about by every wind of doctrine," and yet yearning for some haven of rest, some stay in a stronger arm; and promises to give him that rest and support, in the presence of an external power to which he must conform his actions, become its servant, submit to its will, adopt its decrees, believe by its belief, hope in its promises, live in its life, be immortal in its immortality. It does not cut the ship from its anchorages, and give it up to be tossed about by every wave and storm, but binds it by a stronger cable to a safer rock. It does not open the cage, and let the imprisoned bird go free; for it knows that in this inclement clime, if left to itself, the bird must perish: but it provides a better abode, and purer water, and healthier nutriment, and a place in which, even though imprisoned, the bird will rejoice to dwell, and sing as sweetly, and take its flight as boldly, and plume its wings as gladly, as if it were ranging in a forest. It does not compassionate the tree, which cannot grow except rooted to the soil, and cut those roots and tear up the trunk, as

if it could live in independence; but it transplants it from a hungry ground, full of poisonous juices, and imbeds it in a genial loam, where its fibres will strike deeper, and its boughs spread kindlily and fully into the majesty of their perfect stature. It never promises to man *liberty;* for man was not made for liberty, and can no more live in it than fishes in the air, or birds in the water: but it takes him from one evil servitude, and places him in another which is good. We renounced the devil at our baptism; we swore obedience unto Christ.

CHAPTER XIV.

In this vow of obedience to Christ are involved many profound ethical truths. But I will first call your attention to a form which, not indeed in the primitive Church, but at an early period of Christianity, about the fourth century, was introduced to follow it. Our own baptismal service speaks of the regenerated infant as one "who is sworn manfully to fight under Christ's banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end." In the ancient Church the same truth was symbolised under the form of an unction. "He was anointed with oil," says Chrysostom, "as the athletes, or wrestlers, when about to enter into the arena, ἀλείφεται, ὥσπερ οἱ ἀθληταὶ εἰς στάδιον ἐμβησόμενοι."[1] "You came to the font, you were anointed," says Ambrose,[2] "as an athlete of Christ, as one about to wrestle in the wrestling with this world. Venisti ad fontem . . . unctus es, quasi athleta Christi, quasi luctam hujus sæculi luctaturus."[3]

The Church, therefore, regards the life of man as a struggle, and education as a means of aiding him in a battle, and enabling him to fight it manfully. It is the uniform language of Scripture. "To fight a good fight," "to put on the whole armour of

[1] Homil. vi. in Coloss., p. 1358.
[2] De Sacrament. lib. i. c. 11.
[3] See the passages referred to in Bingham's Eccles. Antiq. book xi. c. 9.

God," "to make our members the soldiers (ὅπλα) of God," "Christ the Captain of our salvation," "to fight and run a race as combatants in the arena," "to endure hardness as a good soldier,"—these and other like phrases meet us at every page.

And what is life but a struggle? And can it be otherwise, but by a miracle which shall alter the whole nature of man, and the constitution of the world? And even were it otherwise, is there not something in our better reason—in our heart of hearts—which would disdain such an indolent existence?

We have seen that the perfection of our nature lies in conforming our minds in their thoughts, feelings, and actions, to some fixed outward standard. Is there any difficulty in so doing? any thing which confuses our notions—gives us indistinct images of outward realities—tempts us to wander away from the positive commands under which we live—suggests feelings which are not in accordance with the real nature of things? Is the mind like a piece of wax, which is moulded passively and unresistingly after the shape of some outward model? or has it movements of its own, vague, ungovernable, and rebellious, as a petulant child whom we would in vain fix in one posture—as a bough, which, when we bend it, springs back from the hand—as a weight which refuses to follow the arm that would raise it—as a paralytic limb (it is Aristotle's description) convulsively twitching in the direction opposite to the will of the body? If this be so, all effort to be good must be a struggle and a battle.

But let us look generally to facts. Are not "all things full of labour?" (Eccles. i. 8.) What is the history of states? It is a narrative of wars, and battles, and conquests of one nation struggling to impose its yoke upon another, and of the other

struggling to shake it off—of governments struggling to control subjects, and subjects struggling to rebel—of faction striving against faction, power against power. What is the history of the Church, but a struggle against the world—a struggle to maintain truth, and preserve purity, and uphold right in the face of a deadly enemy? What is the life of the individual, when you have taken from it his struggles against ignorance, and weakness, and self-deceit, and the deceit of others, poverty, disappointment, despair, sickness, calamities? What is study, philosophy, reason, but an effort to escape from ignorance; to force down into intelligible order a mass of strange and perplexing phenomena, to pierce through obstacles, and clear up obscurities? What is art, but an effort, which the highest minds are the first to pronounce vain, to realise, and embody, and perpetuate high conceptions, in defiance of the weakness of our own minds, the poverty and stubbornness of our materials, the dulness of those to whom we address ourselves? What is even perception by the senses, but a labour? We *learn* by degrees to see, to hear, to feel, as much as we learn a strange language. This has been clearly shewn. Couch the eyes of a blind man, and he can neither walk nor see, till by patience, and repeated trials, and many efforts, he has been able to form correct ideas of figures and distances. And then turn to the moral life of man. Where is the hero, the patriot, the temperate, the just, the patient, when they have nothing against which to struggle—no temptation, no difficulty? Even the life of guilt, is it not a struggle—a struggle to keep down remorse, to hide the past, to escape from the future, to smooth away the obstacles of law, to resist the voice of good, which meets man at every turn, as much as the voice of evil?

But consider more narrowly, and see if you cannot trace two different kinds of struggles. *Here* is a demagogue armed with a list of supposed grievances and imagined rights, who has framed to himself some Utopian constitution, in which every man is to do as he likes; and in order to realise this, he is struggling to subvert the established institutions of his country. *There* is a monarch, as Charles I., fighting to maintain for his successors and his people an hereditary throne, with its prerogatives, and a fixed system of government, which he did not frame, but succeed to, and which he is bound to save from popular usurpation. Here is the Church, striving even to death to hand down a creed, a ritual, and a priesthood, imposed on it by an external authority, over which it professes to have no power. It fights not only to preserve this from the encroachment of heresy, but to subdue all the world to receive it. In another part is a rationalist, with an hypothesis of his own, which yet he firmly believes to be true, striving with all his powers to undermine the Church, to pare away its creed, to alter its ritual, to prove its priesthood a mere mockery, so that nothing may stand in the way of his own imagination. Both are struggling, both zealous. If the Church has enthusiasm, atheism has also its fanaticism. They differ in this, that one contends for a fancy of its own, another for a treasure committed to it from without. Again, compare the three hundred Spartans dying at Thermopylæ in obedience to the laws, and the thousands who fell in France fighting madly against the enemies of the Revolution. Both struggled. Both fell like heroes. But the Spartans were acting under discipline; the French under a wild impulse. Glory, liberty, France; some object of their own, elevated, perhaps, and noble, but still their own, was the watchword with the French.

Obedience was the epitaph of the Spartans. Extend the comparison to art. Compare Fuseli with Phidias; a modern architect with the designers of our cathedrals; Racine and Corneille, Byron and Pope, with Shakspeare and Homer. In both are efforts to produce perfection, to place before us high objects clothed in noble forms. But Phidias copied accurately the external standard of Nature, even to a vein upon the ribs, and the wrinkling of the flesh under the arms.[1] Fuseli struck out a wild phantasmagoria in his own brain, which he struggled indeed to embody in form and colour, but confessed himself incapable of reducing to the standard of real nature. Shakspeare copied man as he found him. Corneille and Byron imagined men, and then tried to picture a world suitable to be occupied by them. Modern builders, if asked for their plans, would find them all within their own heads. The best ancient builders, whether Grecian or Gothic, were evidently bound down by fixed rules, submitted to hereditary teachers, in some cases lived together it might seem in fraternities, which perpetuated a rigid code of art, from whose ultimate principles no variation was allowed, even in the freest play of fancy. So also philosophy. Compare all the schools, whether ancient or modern. All have

[1] I am indebted for this observation to a distinguished painter, Mr. Haydon, who has traced the downfal of art in this country precisely to the same causes which have corrupted our morals; and whose efforts to recall artists to the strict accurate study of the models of Nature, as external to mere fancy, it is hoped will receive more encouragement than has been hitherto extended to them. Art and the higher branches of philosophy, and education itself, are intimately connected. And it is interesting to observe, that both in France, Germany, and England, a new school of art is arising, imbued with a far better spirit than any which has prevailed during the unhappy period of the last two centuries.

struggled to reach truth, to disseminate theories, to overcome doubt and error. But you will not find a noble, permanent, really divine philosophy, which does not bear upon its face the mark of an external origin, and of an external standard of truth distinct from the mere opinion of its founder. And you will not find one, which professes to rest on such an opinion, but it passes away like a shade, and sinks into materialism and scepticism. It will struggle violently and convulsively—more violently perhaps than the other—but its struggles will end in nothing. Take, lastly, the region of sense; look at the efforts of man to trace the laws of the material world. Before Bacon there were physical philosophers who gave accounts of the operations of Nature, and struggled to become its master. They, too, had their theories —their general principles—by which they explained its secrets, and professed to control its movements. Why is it we laugh at them? Why do we ridicule their "animal spirits," their "plastic natures," their "sympathies," their "magic," under which names they struggled to reduce the realities of the material universe? Because they were fictions of their own mind; mere hypotheses. Why do we admire Bacon? Because he recalled men from fostering these dreams, and from struggling to interpret Nature by them as a true standard, and compelled them rather to shape their internal speculations to the external facts, not external facts to their internal speculations.

Such is the distinction throughout; and in morals it is the same. Morals, I say, not as if the whole circle of human operation was not also moral, as exhibiting the workings of the one human mind, which it is the business of Ethics to educate; but taking the common language of the day, and meaning by the word those actions which are more im-

mediately concerned with human passions and desires. When does the fear of God become superstition instead of religion? When man endeavours to propitiate Him, not by the means which He has appointed, but by *self-invented* forms. When did self-denial degenerate from true Christian mortification of the flesh to a vain asceticism? When it framed its own code of restrictions, instead of conforming to those which are appointed by the Church. When was Catholicism corrupted into Popery? When Christians lost sight of the rigid lines of truth and discipline received from the Apostles, and invented creeds and a polity of their own. When did the tyranny and usurpation of Popery sink into the still more fatal tyranny, and still more unauthorised usurpation of Dissent? When men, in shaking off abuses, lost sight of the rules of antiquity, and set up a new scheme on their own imagination.

Again, when does benevolence become officiousness? When man strives to do good, not in his place, according to the prescribed rules of his office or of society, but meddles with things and persons with which he has no authority to interfere. When would a soldier be punished for fighting like a hero against the enemy? When he left the post where he was placed, and rushed into battle by an impulse of his own. When does liberality become vain-glory? When man ceases to regard it as a duty imposed on him by God, and gives to gratify himself. When is relaxation idleness and false indulgence? When no command can be assigned for it; and the only answer given is, "I like it—I choose it." When does study lead men into forbidden speculations, engendering doubt, conceit, false bias, restlessness, and all the other evils of unhallowed curiosity? When the mind studies

without a guide, and under no command from a teacher.

There are, then, two struggles placed before man in this life; and he may choose between them. He may take an external rule, and to this endeavour to conform his internal feelings and actions. Or he may take these internal feelings, and to them endeavour to conform the world without him. There is no third course possible; and I think even the little which has been said may point out on which side is wisdom and goodness.

But how is it that these internal feelings are thus naturally at variance with the external standard? What is this rebellious, paralytic, disturbing agency within the mind, which we can only put down and bring to order by a struggle, and the struggle of a whole life?

Here, again, let us commence with the senses. When a person whose eyes have been couched first opens them, does the internal idea excited in him by the sight of a man, for instance, correspond with the external reality? Or does he "see men as trees walking?" Does his notion of the size of the room, of the distance of the wall, at all coincide with the truth? Or would he, if he followed the dictates of his fancy, stretch out his hand to touch a table which was twenty feet off? Observe an infant feeling about in its cradle, its eye wandering, its ear turning restlessly to catch sounds. It is endeavouring to adjust its impressions of external objects to the objects themselves. Instead of its mind being, as the miserable sensuistic school of Locke supposed, the passive mirror and receptacle of outward objects, there is something at work within it, perverting, anticipating, and conjuring up ideas as different from the reality, as when a man in the dark mistakes a bush for a robber, or a white sheet for a

ghost; or as when a lake ruffled by the wind reflects back the broken branches and wavering outline of the motionless tree upon the banks; or when a ploughboy runs after the rainbow, or a child believes that the moon is only a few feet in circumference. The fact is, that the mind is *active;* and its activity moves under laws which conjure up groups of ideas spontaneously, *taking, as it were, the key-note from some real circumstance or quality in the outward object;* but then running on and stringing to it a very different combination. It takes the right road, leading to the right house, but diverges from it into a wrong one. It catches the first word of a sentence, but instead of patiently reading the remainder, finishes with a sentence of its own. It hears the first notes of a piece of music, but runs off from it into another. And then when the two are compared, the imagination is at variance with the reality. It is false.

Now how has the mind acquired this power of spontaneously calling up strings of imaginary phantasies, when once it has been put in motion by a real external object? It is by the action of two laws, familiar to all writers on the subject. *One may be called the law of continuity, the other the law of association.*[1] By the law of continuity, the mind, when the chord has once been struck, continues, as Hume describes it, to repeat of itself the same note again and again, till it finally dies away. By association, it falls naturally into the same train of consecutive ideas, to which it has been before accustomed. Imagine a glass so constructed, that when the face placed before it was withdrawn, the image should still continue reflected on it for a certain time, becoming fainter and fainter until it finally

[1] See especially the use which Bishop Butler has made of these in his Analogy, chap. i. and chap. v.

disappeared. This would represent the law of continuity. Imagine that when a book and a man had been once placed before it together, it should be able, when the book was next brought alone, to recall the image of the man also. This would be the law of association. On these two laws depend the spontaneous activity of the mind. They scarcely require illustration; and the fact at present is all that I am concerned to shew. Does a sound dwell on the ear when the vibration of the air has ceased? Does an image rest on the retina when the wave of light has passed away? Look at the sun, and then close the eye. Do you still see a ball of light? Does an object of love, or hate, or fear, dwell upon, and haunt, and possess the imagination? Is there such a thing as *harping* on a thought, reiterating it, or rather finding it reiterated by some agency within you, even when you dislike it? Again, do we remember scenes past from the sight of scenes present? Will a song bring tears into the eyes of a Savoyard with the thought of his country? Will a little black dot suggest to a child the key of the piano which she is to strike? Can persons talk fluently, the words flowing into their minds, they know not whence, in the order in which they have recurred before? And in both these operations, remember, the mind, though seemingly active, is in reality passive. It follows a bias given to it by nature. It walks away, like the man in the German tale when mounted on his steam-leg. And though it may be governed and controlled, the movement itself is mechanical. We do not will the thought before it rises in our mind. We do not choose the word that comes uppermost. We know nothing of the train of ideas which in a day-dream will come upon the mind in wild fantastic procession. The poet cannot anticipate the

bright visions which spring up before him. They come from without; and all that he can do is to repel them when they come. Is not this a paralytic movement, or, at least, a troublesome spontaneity, over which it behoves us much to keep watch, and to control it, lest it lead us into mischief? Is it not like the tendency of the molten metal to overflow and break the mould; a tendency which will produce nothing but a shapeless unmeaning lump, unless the limits of the mould are strong enough to repress it?

But consider, is there not something in our nature which lulls us to sleep on our post, unnerves our resistance, binds us hand and foot, so that we permit the movement to take its course, to call up fancy after fancy, which occupy the mind until they become fixed in it, and take the form and solidity of real substance, and we can no longer repel them, and must submit to receive them as the standard and rule of our actions, and to fight against every intrusive reality which would dispute with them the possession of our hearts?

Is not this the magical influence of *pleasure*? Do we not willingly admit a train of ideas which are *agreeable*? Is it not hard to repel them? and still harder to succumb at once to such as are full of pain?

Now what I would especially point out is, that by a remarkable constitution of Nature, as we are thus subject to the influence of pleasure, so pleasure is peculiarly attached to the operations of the fancy, and peculiarly dissevered at first from the perception of real external truths. "To let our heart cheer us in the days of our youth, and to walk in the ways of our heart, and in the sight of our eyes" (Eccl. xi. 9), is easy and very agreeable. To obey God's commandments, which our own heart did not frame—this is

striving to enter at a strait gate and narrow way. Now how is it, that pleasure is thus connected with fancy rather than truth, with the imaginations of our own heart, rather than with the stern realities of life?

In the first place, then, the mind once set in motion runs on of itself into its own channels, and cannot be checked without an effort; and effort is painful. A boy sits down before his book: some word suggests to him a game at ball. Instantly his imagination diverges from the book to the play-ground, and to recall it is a hard task; to indulge it is full of pleasure. He cannot make the effort; and the task is not learned. An astronomer, as Newton, observes some fact in a star; instantly his imagination, or power of stringing together new combinations of ideas, springs out into a large theory, explanatory of the whole system of the universe. And the ideas follow each other so readily, and their symmetry is so fascinating, that it requires a struggle to break them off, and fix the attention once more upon facts. It is thus that men delight in throwing themselves back in an easy chair, and abandoning the mind to its own reveries; that they sit for hours by the side of a flowing stream, not listening (for listening implies an effort), but allowing all their senses to stand open, and admit every object that appears—the ripple on the water, the floating clouds, the wandering insect, the murmuring of leaves, the songs of the birds, all the wavering lights and shades of a summer noon,—and they call it luxury. But to keep one thought steadily before the mind, to put curbs and bridles into the mouth of our restless wandering fancy, to prohibit the approach of every idea which does not combine with our leading inquiry,—this is the act of thinking; and with it the brow becomes wrinkled, and the hair turns grey.

But, secondly, the images and thoughts which do thus intrude into the mind are those which have come there before most frequently; and none come so frequently, because none are so easily admitted, as those which are mixed with pleasure. Thus dreams, not of misery in future, but of happiness; visions, not of deformity, but of beauty; retrospects, not of shame and suffering, but of scenes which flattered our pride, or which enhance our present enjoyment,—are the ordinary occupants of an idle mind, the natural creation of an uncontrolled fancy.

Thirdly, the very nature of reality, of the external world in general, as it appears to us, is imperfection, compared with the perfection which the mind is capable of conceiving. And thus fiction is always more pleasurable than truth. Place before the eye the most beautiful landscape, and the fancy can always heighten a colour, or soften a shadow, or new-model a line, or enlarge a dimension; or, at any rate, conceive something new, and therefore more interesting than the present scene, and not liable to certain objections which may be made to the one before us. Place a man in possession of a world; load him with wealth; let him have "gardens and orchards, and trees and pools of water, servants and maidens, silver and gold"—"let not whatsoever his eyes desire be kept from him,"—and yet he will point out some defect; a black spot in his own heart, if not in the objects which he grasps —a yearning for something infinite, whereas all that he possesses is finite; and he will still find out a wish to gratify, a want to be supplied. This power of boundless conception, or of surpassing all reality, is inherent in the human mind. It is an important fact in the science of Ethics. If it were to be explained formally, we might say that no object can

be presented to the mind without its possessing *limits;* otherwise it is no object at all, for it can have no *shape,* or *figure,* or *definite character.* If I see a stone, it must be square, or round, of a certain size, occupying a certain place. If I hear of a liberal act, it must be shewn in making such an amount of sacrifice to a person of such qualities, under such and such circumstances of difficulty. And that which describes the act, also *defines, marks out* certain *limits* within which it was confined. But the very notion of a limit implies that we perceive something beyond it. Nothing is perceived to bound us, but that which checks us when advancing. The mind, at least, always overshoots the mark, and then is recalled. No one is warned against trespassing till he has passed the hedge. No man feels confined by narrowness of income, till he has wants which surpass it. No man is conscious of his weakness, till he has made attempts beyond his power. Thus infinity is the essential law of the human imagination, and finiteness the natural condition of real existences in this world. Hence novels, poetry, romance; theories which endeavour to exhibit strict unity, order, and other qualities of intellectual beauty, in a far higher degree than we find them in the reality; fictions of characters possessing heroic, divine attributes, of events of magnitude, danger, felicity, beyond what meets us in common life. They all, as Bacon has observed, are contrived to gratify the longing of the human mind for that infinite perfection which it cannot find in the world.

But, fourthly, besides these pleasures of the imagination, there are certain pains to which the body is liable — hunger, thirst, cold, and all the other animal feelings of our nature; which, without any active part being taken by ourselves in provoking them, rise up from the constitution of our body, and

naturally suggest their own relief, and the pleasure attending it. And indeed all painful things whatever—as, for instance, want, poverty, disappointment, humiliation, the sufferings of those whom we love, the triumph of persons whom we hate—painful as they are in themselves, yet are pleasurable in the prospect of relief. And even objects naturally horrible, and with which no thought of relief is coupled, possess a species of fascination by throwing the mind into strong emotion; every consciousness of emotion being a consciousness of power, and connected with the perception of greatness in the object which excites it. And thus the mind is tempted to dwell on them, and they take possession of our thoughts, and finally of our actions.

Often, also, it is not easy to repel them, because they seem to come at first under the aspect of a positive command from the Being who created us. "It is my duty," a hungry man argues, "to support life. I am commanded not to perish by thirst. I ought to raise myself in the world; to improve my condition; to obtain the respect of my fellow-creatures; to relax myself occasionally in enjoyment; to have strong feelings and emotions." And thus when these pleasurable imaginations come to the gate of our heart asking for admission, the porter mistakes, or affects to mistake, their request for an order from superior authority, opens the wicket to let a few pass in for an hour; and when the wicket is passed, they seize the porter, bind him down, open the great gates, and the whole troop come pouring in, and master the citadel.

One more remark may be made: that something at least of the pleasure of indulging our imagination arises even from the very positiveness of the commands against it—

"The more thou dam'st it up, the more it burns."

When a child is suffered to walk in a garden, he is especially told by his parent not to touch any fruit. Here is an external law imposed on him, and his goodness and duty lies in not transgressing it. But the very prohibition suggests to him the thought of violating it; it shews that violation is possible; that there is something within his reach, which he has only to stretch out his hand to obtain. It shews, also, that the parent's eye is withdrawn, and has left him to himself. The love of freedom springs up; a little inclination for asserting independence; a little suspicion that what is so scrupulously guarded must be very delicious; and a little disposition to engage in a battle with the authority which is thus stern. The very solemnity of a prohibition, and the severity of conditions guarding it, will irritate this desire to evade it by impressing the fact more strongly on the mind. Go up to the most quiet person in the world, and dare him, under violent threats, to strike you, and see if he will not do so at last. Tell a child not to put the candle to the bed-curtains, for that he will infallibly be burned, and enlarge at the same time on the horrors of fire, and ten chances to one but the next night your house will be burnt down. And this is the explanation of that common proverb, "that stolen things are sweetest," and others of the same kind. If you do not want to put a vice into a person's mind, say nothing against it. And thus it seems St. Paul speaks with the same distinctness: "I had not known lust (or concupiscence, or desire generally), except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence; for without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the command-

ment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me" (Rom. vii.).[1]

This, then, seems to be the explanation of that sinful tendency inherent in human nature, which all moralists have acknowledged—a tendency to err from the right road, to act independently of the positive laws under which we are placed by God—to follow our own will instead of his commands. And if you, the reader, will look into it carefully, you will find that it involves some very important and practical applications.

In the first place, it accounts for sin being called so commonly in the Bible, the "*imagination* of man's *heart*." Its chief seat lies in the intellect, in an aberration of *thought*. This aberration, indeed, may be stimulated by mere animal sensation, as when the thought of stealing is suggested by the sense of hunger; or its correction may be made difficult by the corporeal pain which is always connected with exertion of the mind; or it may be made more tempting by corporeal pleasures associated with its indulgence. And thus it may also be said, that the original seat of sin lies in the flesh, inasmuch as the pleasure which gives force to the fancy is undoubtedly the result of a bodily emotion. It is felt somewhere in the body; and perhaps without the body there would be neither pleasure nor pain. But as these sensations are mainly out of our power; as we cannot help feeling pain and pleasure when our body is affected in such and such a manner,—our business with sin lies chiefly there, where we can cope with it,—*in our thoughts*.

[1] The reader must be careful to bear in mind the remainder of St. Paul's answer to the question, which will naturally arise: "Is the law sin?" otherwise such statements as these are not without danger.

Secondly, our business with these thoughts is mainly to *prohibit* the entrance of all those which are bad. You cannot help their appearing; for they come by an instinctive working of machinery within us, over which you have no control. You cannot tell what thoughts will follow each other, how they are strung together, how one train wakes up a second, and that a third, by little signs imperceptible, it would seem, to all but themselves. Till the thought is actually present, you know nothing of it; otherwise it would be both present and absent at the same time. But before it fixes itself, you have the power of preventing it; just as Nature has also given you the opportunity of stopping the words which come into your head, before they pass the "barrier of the teeth," and become irrevocable.

Thirdly, you will ask, what is a bad thought? and I am going to give you an answer which will appear harsh and overstated. I say, then, that every thought is bad which is erroneous; and every one is erroneous which is not conformable to some external mould, rule, law, or form, which you did not invent yourself, but found placed over you by a superior authority, and that authority emanating from God. Sin, in the Greek of the Bible, is ἁμαρτία, "error," not hitting the mark, a deviation from a right line. It is also called lawlessness, παρανομία. By Socrates it was made identical with falsity; and virtue was called a science, ἐπιστήμη, as depending on our perception of things as they really and truly are; in other words, on our making our own internal notions of things coincide with that nature which they possess independently of us. So also Aristotle makes reason, or the faculty by which we discover truth, an essential element in every act of virtue. I model the figure of a man. Has it any external type or counterpart? Yes; a figure in my

own fancy. But has this any original in the real external world? No; then undoubtedly it is bad. I compose a piece of music. How do the notes follow each other? simply as they occurred to my own caprice, or according to some deeper law of harmony, which I can trace in the natural constitution of what is called the ear—a law laid down by Him who made the ear? If the former, the music is worthless; if the latter, it is good. I classify a number of plants. Have I made the classification myself? is it purely arbitrary? have I followed any other's guidance, or are the classes distinguished in nature as I have distinguished them in theory? These are the questions to be asked before we can pronounce on its goodness. A bad history is one which does not record facts as they occurred. A bad philosophy is one which shews no respect for our experience of the facts of nature. A bad servant is one who acts on his own impulses, not on the commands of his master. A bad feeling is that which is excited by false appearances: as jealousy, when there is no ground for suspicion; hatred, when the object is lovable; fear, when we fear what is despicable; confidence in self, when ourselves are vanity. A bad act is one which departs from the standard erected for us by God. A bad appetite is one which covets an ideal, imaginary object, and clothes it with qualities which in truth it does not possess. And without this sense of external law, not made by ourselves, this deliberate resolution to adhere to it, this consciousness of acting up to it,—I say that every act, however harmless it may seem, even though its effects be good, and *externally* itself be conformed precisely to the will of God, yet it is bad and worthless. It wants the essential condition of moral goodness. How true this is, will be seen more clearly as we proceed.

Fourthly, you will observe that this definition of virtue, as obedience to external law, of vice as the neglect of it, accords with all those theories of morals, which describe a good action as one which is conformed to the real relations of things, to eternal distinctions between right and wrong—as one which is pointed out by right reason, which is agreeable to truth, to the laws of nature, and even to the rule of conscience,—for conscience, like the Dæmon of Socrates, is always a prohibitory law, telling us not what should be done, but what should not be done; and then only a safe guide, as being clearly of external origin, not invented by ourselves, since we do not invent what fetters and shackles us in our inclinations. It accords still more precisely with those who define goodness by the will of God; since every positive institution is thus traced up to God; and those men only are to be taken as our guide, who are appointed by God, profess to deliver God's law, to found their whole authority on His commission. And it shews clearly the necessity of referring not only to revelation generally, but to the *Catholic* Church, as our primary authority in morals, since in no other way can we learn what God did reveal to man, except by the witness of the Apostles; nor what the Apostles witnessed to, except by the consenting Catholic testimony of the independent Churches which they founded in different parts of the world.

You might go through all the systems of Ethics, and you would find that they all virtually concurred in recognising the observance of some external standard of right and wrong, instead of our own fancy, as the first condition of all goodness. Thus Plato places virtue in the knowledge of the τὰ ὄντα, the immutable attributes and laws of God, by conforming to which we become like to God. Aristotle,

in the observance of a mean; or in accommodating our feelings and actions to the exact measure of the circumstances in which we act; and in discovering this mean, we must be guided by the opinion of wise men, *οἱ φρόνιμοι*. So the modern Utilitarians, false and miserable as their speculations are, could not escape from the necessity of calculating consequences in order to test the good or evil of an act; these consequences being as much an external rule as any revelation from God to man. So, also, the school which makes benevolence the essence of goodness recognises the necessity of destroying all self-will. The Stoics, who would extirpate pleasure, traced to it the principal influence in encouraging internal noxious fancies. Even the Sceptics and Sophists, who made every man "the measure of all things," and the will of man his only law, were obliged to fall back upon Nature, and say that Nature had framed us to feel such appetites and passions, and therefore, because Nature had so framed us, they were true and real. In all cases, an external law is recognised, and conformity to it is made goodness, and departure from it vice. Nor could it be otherwise, if indeed what we stated is true: that man cannot act, or feel, or think, without the consciousness of something in him and also of something external to himself.

Lastly, I would recall your attention to what was said on the precise nature of the struggle to be maintained, when we would bring our hearts and minds "into obedience to the law of God." For practically this is the point on which the age is most ignorant, and our success is most involved. And as it will rather startle you at first, and require some explanation, we will postpone it for the next chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

THOSE who have studied the sculpture of the Greeks are inclined to suppose that each statue is the representative of human nature in some particular attitude, character, or development; representing, for instance, strength, grace, purity, dignity, or some other general attribute. Now, if we were called on to embody in a statue the human mind engaged in a struggle to be virtuous, wrestling as the anointed wrestler, and as he is described by the Church when speaking of the warfare of a Christian, in what attitude should we place it? This is the question before us. But there are two postures only in which a combatant can be placed, as there are but two battles which he can be called on to fight. In one he is endeavouring to gain something which he does not possess; in the other, he is endeavouring to preserve something which he possesses already. Shall we place our statue in a defensive or offensive position, grasping at the distant, or holding firm the present—the image of *desire*, or of *precaution?*

You are ready at once to answer, that a Christian, or any good man, is struggling to make himself good, to obtain the praise of God, to secure heaven, to promote the happiness of his fellow-creatures, to conform himself to the image of God, to purify his mind; that, as an artist, he has before him an image of perfection which he is constantly striving to realise; that, as a philosopher, his whole business is with discovering, extending truth, im-

proving society, contemplating vast conquests and advancements in science, which will make the future a paradise, where the past has been a wilderness; that, as a moralist, he can never be satisfied while there is a higher point of goodness to be reached; that he has an unextinguishable craving for an approximation to the Divine nature, and his whole being is a hunger and thirst till he obtains it. You would place him at once in the attitude of desire. But, hark! were there not some little words in that last sentence which may cause a misgiving. "Never satisfied!" "inextinguishable craving!" Is this, then, the true and rightful position of a human mind? The Greeks said, yes. "Every art and every science," says Aristotle, in the first words of his Ethics, "and in like manner every moral act and moral choice, seems to aim at some end." Ἐφίεσθαι, to throw itself upon, as a hound springing on its prey; ὀρέγεσθαι, to stretch itself out after; ἐφορμᾶσθαι, to move upon; *cupere*, to catch at; *appetere*, to go straight to,—are the Greek and Latin words expressing the attitude we are conceiving. To long after, or stretch out the body at full length, to grasp at, catch, follow after, are similar English metaphors.

Let us consider the question.

And, first, is it not suspicious that the elements of which the feeling of desire or appetite is composed, are so similar to that action of the mind to which we have just been tracing the principle of sin? For an object to be desired; it must be absent in reality, yet present in the mind; brought into it by that imaginative power which peoples the world with dreams and visions of past or future, until it blinds our eyes to the realities that are present. And it must also be pleasant, otherwise we should not dwell on it. But unreality and pleasure were the two

marks set on all sinful thoughts. Yes, you will say, the desire of confessedly bad objects is itself bad, there can be no doubt; but is desire itself bad? has it in itself "the nature of sin?" Let the object be good, will it not even be a virtue? Ought we not to strive after perfection, to fight for a crown, to hunger and thirst after righteousness? This is the question which I now wish to examine, and here seems to lie the fundamental difference between Christian and heathen Ethics. The highest effort of heathen Ethics was to place the human mind in the attitude of ardent desire after goods which it could only imagine, but did not possess; but this very attitude is full of imperfection and error. Whereas Christianity throws him into the other attitude, of defending what he possesses already; and this is the proper posture originally contemplated by Nature, but incapable of being realised until the gifts as well as the laws of Christianity were made known to the world. Have I stated the distinction clearly? It is worthy the deepest attention; for we shall see that the perception of it is necessary to understand the ethical character of Christian doctrine; that by confusing it, this doctrine was corrupted; and that it brings out into the fullest light the wonders, and privileges, and responsibilities of the Church.

Compare, then, generally the two attitudes as if they were embodied in sculpture, and think which presents at first sight the higher features of goodness. In the one there is the consciousness of a want—the feebleness, discontent, restlessness, feverish excitement, which always accompanies want. In this troubled state of the heart, the object which is to fill it can scarcely be seen in its real and true proportions: it will be magnified, distorted, misunderstood. In the straining after it, there will be a

tendency to overlook other things, the things which are present; to sacrifice positive duties; to think little of means compared with ends:

> So study evermore is overshot:
> While it doth study to have what it would,
> It doth forget to do the thing it should.
> And when it hath the thing it hunteth most,
> 'Tis won, as towns with fire; so won, so lost.
> *Love's Labour's lost*, act i. sc. 1.

Desire also is essentially selfish. It springs from the sense of a want within ourselves, which can only be filled up by something given to ourselves. It implies dependence on external things over which we have no control; for if they were within our power, we should possess them at once; and this dependence has always been recognised by moralists as a blot in the perfection of man: *αὐτάρκεια*, or independence, is placed by Aristotle among the first conditions of human happiness. It is not permanent: if satisfied, it ceases. And thus, if desire were a good, the attainment of its end would destroy itself. If not satisfied, it sinks into weariness, disappointment, disgust, and despair. It tends to absorb the thoughts in one single object, whereas the condition of man requires that he should be constantly looking round him in every direction, watching over not one passion, but many passions; fulfilling not one duty, but many duties; guarding not against one temptation, but many temptations. "He is a creature," says Bishop Butler, "endowed with particular affections;" and if he fixes his eye on any one singly, the rest will run wild, and hurry him into ruin. There is, moreover, in desire that want of repose, firmness, dignity, and self-confidence, which mark a truly noble and heroic character. There is a want also of trust and acquiescence in the will of Him, by whom all our positions in the world are marked out,

all movement regulated, all turned to good. Energy indeed there is, which is one quality of goodness; but it is an energy impatient, unruly, and intemperate; more resembling the convulsive movements of one in pain and fretfulness, than the steady actions of one under law and discipline. These are mere hints. But if a statue were formed in this spirit, the eye distended, the arms stretched out to grasp at a shadow, every nerve strained, every lineament betokening restlessness and pain; though it were a noble figure, animated with the noblest longing after the noblest of objects, would it be a spectacle on which the eye could rest with perfect satisfaction and approbation?

And now look into the images of the human mind set before us in heathen philosophy — in the heroic periods of ancient history — even in those modern theories and works of fiction, in which men, without formally abjuring Christianity, have entirely departed from its principles, — and see if almost all the personages whom you trace there are not painted in the attitude of desire; and if to this very cause is not owing that morbid feverishness and discomfort, that vague empty aspiration after unreal perfection, that gloomy discontent, and final self-abandonment, which make indeed the interest, but unmake the real dignity and goodness of the minds that study them. Who are called the greatest philosophers? Men who are struggling to discover truth, who feel that they do not yet possess it, but long for some clear and solid knowledge which may satisfy their doubts. Who are the great heroes? Men filled with a craving for conquest, revenge, fame, or power. Who are the noble minds, held up to admiration in our works of fiction, and especially in the biography of modern German writers? Those who are described as imbued from their birth with

a vague, indescribable, but unconquerable passion for "the beautiful," "the infinite," "the perfect;" whose whole life seems an effort to realise a dream, to grasp, like Ixion, a cloud, with which they have fallen in love; and when the cloud melts away in their grasp, who sink down into a miserable gloom and despair. Look at the religion of the East, and you may trace, not only the superstitions of heathenism, but the false asceticism of a corrupted Christianity, to the principle of desire—the desire for obtaining perfection. Hence self-invented tortures; hence withdrawal from the duties of life; hence efforts to stimulate the imagination, to generate ecstacies and raptures, to obtain communion with God by some mode which He has not appointed. Look, again, at the corruptions of Romanism, all of them traceable originally to *the desire* (and if any desire can be such, surely a laudable desire) of spreading Christianity, impressing the truth forcibly on ignorant minds, holding man in subjection to the spiritual law of God, and preserving peace and unity in the Church. Once more, what were the crimes of the Reformation but the outbreaks of *desire* — on one side, of avarice and cupidity, in the authors of plunder and sacrilege; on the other, of imaginary purity, and a new invented model of Christianity, in those who were the least guilty instigators of those innovations which in Germany have ended at this day almost in the loss of Christianity? And, lastly, what is the present attitude of what is called the public mind, not only in this country, but throughout Europe? Is it not longing for change, anticipating some new discovery, which shall make society happy, and government faultless, and man a god? Does it not speak of the past as a blank, and of the future as fraught with glory? Progress, and advancement, and improvement, are in every mouth;

and he is thought the wisest and the greatest man who can form the most gigantic schemes of coming good, and pursue them with the most restless avidity. And yet in all this we feel, and must feel, that there is something hollow. Self-will, and rationalism, and conceit, and disquiet, and disappointment, and fanaticism of one kind or another, and indifference to law, are visible throughout.

I mean these suggestions merely as hints, to throw you on inquiring into the real nature of that state of mind which is produced by the principle of desire, even under the most favourable aspect.

And now compare it with the other attitude, in which a better philosophy would place it.

Give a man that which he values. Surround him with enemies who threaten to take it from him. Inspire him not only with an ardent affection for that which he possesses, but with confidence in a power within him to retain possession of it. And then watch the temper and posture in which he will gird himself for this defensive struggle. There will be as much energy and vigour as in the other supposed case. But it will be quiet, vigilant, thoughtful, full of dignity and repose, with no effort misdirected, no power wasted, no impatience or restlessness; contented, definite in its objects, clear and precise in its views, satisfied with the present, free from vague unbridled fancies, and, above all, recognising in all its movements a fixed positive external law by which to direct them. Place before you two combatants in a real personal battle; one struggling to kill his antagonist, the other only to defend himself; and which would offer the noblest object to satisfy the eye of a spectator?

And now turn to the history of human nature; and wherever it appears in true nobility of character, you will find it assumes this posture. Leonidas

dying for his country is a far sublimer spectacle than Alexander rapaciously subduing the world. The old Barons of England claiming their Magna Charta, not as new imagined privileges, but as their old "undoubted birthright," are a very different class of men from modern demagogues and reformers. The old schools of philosophy, which struggled only to maintain and diffuse an ancient hereditary faith, are of an infinitely higher character in all their doctrines than the Grecian sects, each aiming at a new theory of its own, and denying that truth had ever yet appeared in the world. Our own English reformers surpassed, by common consent, the reformers of the rest of Europe in this very point, that they chose rather to defend what was old, than to strain after what was new. So also in the best of States, laws are not creative, but prohibitive; they do not place before their eyes an imaginary perfection, and then force men on to attain it; they are content with guarding the boundaries of goodness, as if it were already possessed, and only driving back those who would transgress them. So also in reason. Sound philosophy has always been that which cut off from popular opinions excrescences and superfluities only, leaving the body of them untouched, and only protesting against errors. The unsound always bears on its face the profession of new invented dogmas, and the establishment of a creed of its own. So also in art, in poetry, in all the creative faculties. The works before which men have bowed down in admiration, have not sprung from any *desire* in the mind of producing something grand and striking. Wherever this desire has been fostered, the result has been extravagance and conceit. Great composers in all arts work by an instinct, by an enthusiasm, which supersedes thought, which forms conceptions from without, which hurries them away

under the impulse of feeling (an impulse of which they can give no account), by means of which they are not conscious, to results which they themselves are rarely able to appreciate. All that reason does, is to stand as sentinel over the instinctive movements of the mind, and stop them when transgressing law. Hence, when the critic presumes to create, he always fails; hence "poets are born, not made;" hence the highest ebullitions of genius have always been accompanied with something that borders on absence of mind, on enthusiasm, almost on madness; hence, the instant that rules have been laid down for making fine statues, or fine poems, or fine speeches, or fine buildings, excellence has disappeared from the world — just as if we endeavoured to put a carriage in motion, by substituting for the horses which draw it the reins which are intended to guide them.

The principle is universal. Apply it in education. Take a child, and instead of allowing nature to work of itself, while you only stand by and guard it from excesses and aberrations, frame to yourself a scheme of perfection, prescribe every movement, mould every limb, direct every action, suggest every feeling; and then compare the bandaged, crippled, helpless, distorted mummy, which your art produces, with the healthy vigorous boy who has grown up by the mountain-side, under the free air of heaven, under no other control but that which endeavoured to save it from evil, instead of producing good.

It would take a volume to trace out the full application of this principle. But let us bear it in mind, as we study the history of man, and especially in the view which we are now taking of the initiative rites by which the Christian Church commences the education of its members. And let us also distinguish clearly between that principle of

desire here spoken of, in which men are struggling to obtain something which they never possessed, and a feeling often described under the same name, in which they dread or lament the loss of something which they did once possess. In this latter sense, desire must necessarily exist where weak men are fighting against powerful enemies, to defend a treasure which they deeply value. In this sense, therefore, it is inseparable from human nature and from Christianity. And whenever it is spoken of in the Bible, as it often is, as the trait of a comparatively noble character; when men are said "to hunger and thirst after righteousness;" "their souls to be athirst for the living God;" "to gasp after God as a thirsty land;" to long after him "as the hart longeth for the water-brooks,"—it will be found, I think, that the expression applies either to those men who are not yet supposed to have received the great gift of Christianity, or to those who have experienced or anticipate a temporary loss of it. It means "desiderium," rather than "cupido."

CHAPTER XVI.

In the present time, when so much ignorance prevails on the views of the early Church respecting the real and mysterious effects of the rite of Baptism, it will be safer to describe them in the words of our own Church; and they will best explain the forms employed in antiquity. All that I am desirous to point out at present is, that by the rite of Baptism the Church places the recipient in an entirely new position; gives him a great blessing, which he is hereafter to maintain; gratifies the wants of his nature, instead of stimulating his desire; restores him at once to a state of security and goodness, instead of urging him to save himself by some subsequent efforts,—in one word, throws him into an attitude of defence instead of desire, and fixes by this the nature of the struggle which he will have to maintain. By Baptism, says our Catechism, we are not merely urged or encouraged to become, but are actually made "members of Christ, children of God, inheritors of the kingdom of heaven." We are not told, that if we do right, we shall become new creatures, but are pronounced "regenerate" already, whatever regeneration means: we are not urged to procure admission into the society of the Church, but are declared to be already grafted into its body: we are not told of everlasting salvation as something future, but are already described as heirs of it. And if you will attentively examine the language of St. Paul whenever he speaks of the blessings of baptism, you will find that he uses the past tense. The very things which

a heathen moralist would most desire, such as the mortification of the flesh, the death unto sin, the creation of a new spirit within us, the enlightenment of the mind, the admission into a noble spiritual polity, the cleansing of the conscience, the forgiveness of sins, and restoration to the favour of God, and union with his nature,—all these are described in the Bible as effected by Baptism already. It is something past and done. And the subsequent struggle, for struggle there must be, is to defend what we have received, to secure ourselves from falling from the high estate in which we have been placed. And the pain, and grief, and fear, necessarily attending such a struggle in the face of a deadly and powerful enemy, will not be the vague unsatisfied yearnings of the imagination for a distant good, but the bitter remorse and anxiety for the loss of a treasure once possessed. I repeat the distinction again and again, because it is of vital importance. It is the grand separation between Christian and heathen Ethics.

What, then, are the blessings thus conveyed to us by Baptism?

The first was thus indicated in the ancient Church by unclothing the person who came to be baptised. "When," says St. Cyril of Jerusalem,[1] "ye entered (into the baptistery), you were stripped of your tunic; and this was an image of your putting off the old man, with the deeds thereof.... For since the powers of the adversary used to burrow, as it were, and take up their abode in your limbs, no longer is it lawful for you to wear that clothing of the old body; I mean not that which we see, but the body of the old man, which is corrupted in the desires of deceit."

And heathens, as well as the Church, have felt

[1] Catech. Mystag. xi. n. 11. p. 284.

and longed to be released from this burden of the old man: heathens, as well as Christians, have described their condition by nature as that of a living body tied down to a dead body, and struggling to cast it off. If Socrates was perplexed with the consciousness of this double nature, these two persons within him—one aspiring to all goodness, the other pulling him down to vice; so the most ordinary men describe their evil actions as done when they were not themselves, when they were beside themselves, when they were different persons; and thus endeavour to apologise for crime. What this old man is, cannot be better described than in the scriptural language employed by St. Cyril: *τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον τὸν φθειρόμενον ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῆς ἀπάτης*,—"the old man, which is being corrupted, led on to ruin by the desires of the principle of deceit," —or by those desires which lead us from truth and reality, and are founded on delusive imaginations. It is the mind of man, subject, as we have just described, to be hurried away by the pleasures of the body and of the fancy, to frame images and schemes for itself which are not real. It is ourself, because it is our own mind following its own bias, and working on its own inclinations. It is the old man, because it is human nature as it originally exists, and must be abandoned for a new character. It is ruined, because ruin is the end; mixed up with desire, because desire and pleasure are the stimulants which put it in motion; deceitful, because it does not conform its imaginations to any real external standard.

Every man who has once been misled by it feels its power, and longs to be freed from it. Every man would wish it were possible that the senses should not tempt him to sensuality; that his fancy should not deviate from truth; that his thoughts should not run wild; that his conceptions should

not be false; that he should have the power of overruling this inordinate aberration of his mind, and making himself its master, instead of continuing its slave. For every man has felt the weariness and disappointment, the feverishness of false hope, the anxiety, the vapidness of success, the heavy load which lies upon the mind thus carried away by its own impulses, and would long to be relieved. And half the bustle and stir of life is an effort to escape. It is the movement of men, trying to fly from themselves; struggling to bury deep their own sense of discomfort and misery; turning themselves round in their beds, as if they could thus shake off a load that oppresses them; clambering up, as men forcing themselves to the surface of the water, that they may escape a sense of suffocation, and clear their eyes from a mist of unreality, and behold a real sky, and breathe a pure atmosphere. So it is that Plato describes the convulsive movement of the human soul to burst from this old man within us, which fills us with false desires and empty show. His struggle was to "put off the old man, corrupt in the desires of deceit." But it lay before him as a sad and painful effort, only to be accomplished by a long life; and of which the heathen youth whom he was rearing must have been taught to look forward to the end, before they had experience of its beginning. Christianity accomplishes it at once; tells us that we are free, declares that the old man is destroyed; and only bids us take care that it does not revive. Heathenism puts its child before the face of a giant, and commands him to master it. Christianity prostrates the giant, and places the child over him with a sword at his neck, and only requires vigilance and confidence to prevent him from moving again. Heathenism finds him crushed within the coils of a serpent, and bids him struggle to escape. Christianity rescues

him wholly, and warns him against being entangled in the same snares again.

And thus it is, that in our own baptismal service, previous to the rite itself, we pray that the "old Adam in this child may be so buried, that the new man may be raised up in him; that all carnal affections may die in him; and that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in him; and that he may have power and strength," not merely to commence a struggle, "but to have victory, and triumph against the devil, the world, and the flesh."

And so also St. Paul repeatedly says, "We are buried with him by baptism" (Rom. vi. 4; Colos. xi. 12).

And it was to typify this fact more strongly, that the ancient Church so scrupulously practised immersion. "Our being baptised, and submerged beneath the waters," says Chrysostom, "and then rising up, is a symbol of our descent into Hades, and of our rising from it again."[1] "Just as in a tomb, when you bow your head beneath the waters, the old man in you is buried, and plunging down, is hidden, the whole of it, once for all."[2]

How this was effected is another question. The Church promises to effect it. It performs a simple ceremony. It tells us that, under the veil of this outward rite, a great inward work has been accomplished. If we believe her voice, it is enough to place us wholly in a new position; and entirely to alter the character of that struggle which she commands us to carry on through the rest of life. And the mode in which she explains the fact she asserts, will appear hereafter.

But there is something else beside the power of imagination and desire from which man must be freed, before he can attempt any thing great; and

[1] Hom. xl. in 1 Cor. [2] Hom. xxv. in Joan. iii. 5.

the attempt to make himself good is a great thing, requiring heroic courage, elevated thought, confidence in a power within us, untamed energy, unconquered patience. And before these things can enter into the heart of man, something must be wiped from it—a stain and blot. Man is by birth not only a weak and deluded, but a polluted creature; that is, when placed in the presence of a perfectly pure and holy Being, he would feel, when looking at himself, not only inferior in power, but unworthy of his affections. There would be a sense of demerit, of disgrace, of something which ought to be hidden. And this not only as an adult, when he reflected on his own bad acts, but even as an infant at its first entrance into life, were he capable at that time of comprehending himself. Every man bears about with him that of which he is ashamed; which he cannot lay open even to a common eye, much less to an eye of purity. He has desires which he despises himself, and which therefore he dares not exhibit to be despised by others. He feels weakness, indolence, conceit, selfishness, ignorance, ten thousand emotions which he knows to be poor and degrading. His very body, corrupted as it is, and formed partly for honour and partly for dishonour, drags him down, he scarcely knows how, to a level with brute animals whom he holds in contempt. And when to all this is added the consciousness of willing submission to these debasing appetites and influences, shame acquires additional power, and paralyses every energy. He cannot confront the eye of a Being who is better than himself. He cannot act or walk with pure and holy spirits; and without such a communion, he cannot be raised to make an effort at improvement. He must be left in solitude, and in solitude will perish. So when the Holy Spirit was taken from our first parent, Adam perceived that

he was naked, and hid himself from the face of God. And so also even of the infant: for pollution depends on something more than our own wilful act; it is communicated by contagion. Its influence spreads far wider than the spot on which it first rests. Why do men blush for the sins of their fathers? Why are we jealous of the honour of our country? Why do we preserve from contamination the monuments and deeds of our ancestors? Why does a mere name carry with it infamy or glory? Why does even the neighbourhood of vice contaminate a whole district? Who likes to live in a house stained by some foul crime? Who does not shrink even from sitting by the side of a convicted felon? Purity indeed has an atmosphere around it spreading a little beyond the original circle of its seat: and children are loved for the sake of their parents, and families renowned for the virtue of their founder, and whole regions are consecrated by some one centre of holiness, and ages made memorable by some one deed accomplished in them. But the atmosphere of evil is far more elastic, more searching, more expansive, and permeates every thing that comes in contact with it. Hatred is more vehement than love; it makes fewer discriminations, pauses less, excites more strongly, presses on more rapidly to comprehend even the innocent with the guilty. So we are formed by nature in our moral instincts; and so nature seems to act under an instinct much the same. The sin of a king involves the ruin of the nation. The shame of the father is a curse to his latest posterity. The touch of a plague-stricken man infects an army. And this especially in cases where the law of creation developes one thing from another. Corrupt the seed, and the whole tree which springs from it, and all the myriads of seeds and trees into which it may

spread hereafter, will be corrupted too. Defile the fountain-head, and not the infusion of an ocean into the streams that flow from it will ever purify them to him who discerns the taint. And men are shut up in men; whole races and individuals in the loins of their progenitors. And there is not merely an imaginary, but a real unity binding together every generation with that which preceded it; and spreading through them all the same thread of good or of evil—but of evil chiefly. It is not for us to trace the mode in which an actual derangement of moral organisation may be propagated from man to man. But an actual pollution must be so spread when the parent has sinned, and the child springs from the parent. And so "in Adam all died." And even an infant, whose mind had never wandered into any thought of evil, would, if he could be made conscious of his origin, blush for his connexion with a source of impurity—feel that there was a stain upon him, which made him unfit for communion with a Being of infinite purity,—and be unable to raise himself up manfully and nobly to the full exertion of his strength, till that stain were wiped out. He would be conscious of "original sin;" and this original sin, as well as the shame of real actual guilt, the Church cleanses away by baptism, typifies the fact by ablution with water, restores the mind to the consciousness of purity, enables it to look up even to God himself with an open uncowering eye; and to take its stand as a cleansed and holy thing, to enter fearlessly and proudly on the battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

CHAPTER XVII.

But in the ancient Church even greater things than these were symbolised in the rite of Baptism. It was called not only a "death unto sin," "an indulgence or remission of sin," but "regeneration," "unction," "illumination," "salvation," "a seal of the Lord," "the gift of Christ," "a consecration," "an initiation," "a glory." Some real gift was conveyed in it. And our own Church declares the same truth, when, in the Catechism, it speaks of baptism as that rite "wherein man is made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." Disbelieve all that you can, deny all meaning in outward forms, reject the mystery as impossible, or as leading to practical evil—still you cannot escape from the historical fact, that for 1800 years the rite of baptism has been transmitted through the Church as the supposed means of conveying to man some *real, deep, incalculable blessing*, which without it man cannot attain. And this over and above that destruction of the evil power in whose grasp we are born, and that removal of natural pollution, of which we have spoken already.

Let us look into the human heart, and see if there is in it any chasm unfilled by Nature—any affection for which Nature supplies no adequate object—any universal movement pervading all parts of society, but running into wildnesses and extravagances for the want of some definite path laid down for it. Perhaps *then* we may recognise better the meaning of the words of the Catechism.

There are, then, in the human mind an infinite variety of desires. And the whole movement of the world is impelled by them. It may be a desire to attain, or a desire to maintain a good. But it is in the prospect of some good, or the fear of some evil, that all men act. Stand in the most crowded thoroughfare of London; stop every one you meet—man, woman, and child—and every one would be able to tell you something which he wished or wanted, liked or disliked, and under the influence of which he was then pursuing his walk. The Exchanges, the Church, the Senate-houses, the Courts of Law, the Picture-gallery, the Theatre, the Lounging-room, the Library, the Parks, the Ball-room, the Shop, the Hospital, the Coach-office, the Committee-room, the Scientific Institution—every house, and every carriage, and every thing belonging to every individual within them—is the symbol of some want. Want is the expansive projectile power in the moral world. You may measure its strength by the weight which it lifts, as the vapour struggling under ground heaves up enormous mountains; or as the propelling power of the sap in a tree may be calculated by the vast exuberance of the boughs and foliage which it throws forth. And the wants of men, we say, are infinite in number. Money, fame, power, honour, pleasure, knowledge, goodness, —all these we suppose are different objects, and there are different affections in the mind corresponding with them. Is this the fact? I think not. Is not want in all these various shapes one and the same thing? Is not desire a single principle? just as the creative faculty in the sculptor is one and the same, whether it works in gold, or silver, or clay, or stone. To say, in the infinite multitude of arts, professions, and tastes, into which the world is

divided, *that all men nevertheless desire one and the same thing*, will appear a paradox. But let us see if it be true. If true, it will very much simplify our present inquiry.

I assert, then, that in every thing which attracts the human taste, and excites desire,—in every thing which we pursue as an end,—there is but one quality which moves the appetite. And that quality is *Unity*. As in geometry, let the truth to be proved be placed first before us in the form of a problem. Analyse the feelings and affections of every individual human being, when pursuing "the good," or admiring "the beautiful," or honouring "the great," or even in the relief of pain and enjoyment of pleasure—and you will find that *unity* is the true object which he has before him.

Those who have read the least of ancient philosophy will remember that this is no new doctrine. It has appeared again and again, whenever deep thought has examined into the mysteries of human nature. Ask the noblest of the old philosophers what they meant by "good," and they would always answer with the word "the one;" something which possesses unity: the τὸ ἕν and τὸ ἀγαθόν are identical. And so, in the language of Scripture, God, the centre of all good, is One.

Now, what is meant by "unity?" It is the absence of any break, interruption, limit, separation, in any object, so as to make two of it. An individual is one man, because he has not two distinct minds. A nation is *one*, if it is not broken up into parties and factions. A building is *one*, if in it there is no part which is detached from the rest. A poem is one, if all the parts of it can be ranged round some common centre, so that none would be left out as belonging to a separate subject. It is of

the greatest importance to remember, that unity is not a positive, but a negative idea. It is the denial of plurality.

Whatever, therefore, is perfect in all its parts—whatever is regular and symmetrical, so that there is nothing out of place—whatever is boundless, or so vast, or so concealed, that we cannot discern any limits to it—whatever is so powerful, that we behold nothing more powerful beyond to restrain and divide it—whatever is simple, uniform, constant, permanent, certain, not liable to be affected by other things, independent—whatever is true, that is, agrees uniformly with some uniform external pattern, as a true religious belief with a true religious doctrine—whatever seems to possess a spontaneous active power within itself not flowing from other things—whatever, in one word, is not broken, mutilated, stained, disfigured, inordinate, extravagant, distracted, variable, inconsistent, distorted—all such objects possess *unity*; and because they possess unity, attract the desires of mankind.

It is the "little corner," the *angulus ille*, which now disfigures the farm (*denormat*), which Horace covets, that his farm may then possess regularity and unity. It is the "ring-fence," which enhances the value of the modern estate. It is the "round sum," which the merchant longs to make up before he retires from business. It is the perfect character, spotless and without defect, whom a man that seeks to marry longs to find, and whom the lover believes he has found. He can see no faults; or looks forward to their removal; or does not consider them as faults—otherwise his desire vanishes. What is it that the philosopher admires in the theories of great intellects? It is unity; the one simple principle, from which all others are made to flow, and under which all facts are reducible. What is

the first rule of poetry, but unity? One action, one scene, one division of time, one hero, one consistent character, one style, one metrical form of words? What is music, but the arrangement of sounds so as to form one unbroken series, with one law of rhythm? What is architecture, but giving unity to many stones, many columns, many windows, many distinct portions, which yet are united to the eye? What is government, but the work of binding men together in one society? What is the desire of honour, but the wish that the opinion of others respecting us should coincide, be one, with our own? for no man would desire to be honoured more than he thought that he deserved. What is war, ambition, rivalship, with all the studies and amusements which are framed on the principle of contention, and the desire of power and victory, but a struggle to remove an obstacle, to overpass a limit, to sweep all things plain before us, that there may be no check or break to the unity of our existence? Why is doubt so painful? Why do men plunge either into Romanism or Infidelity, when they find that the Catholic Church does not profess to give them an infallible guide in every act of life? Because they cannot bear the distraction, the wavering, the embarrassment of being suspended between two opinions. Why are the ocean, the sky, the sun, the desert, the night, silence, the crash of thunder, the multitude of stars, rest and repose, energy and force, the infant and the giant,—all beautiful, all objects which we long to contemplate, and contemplate with delight? Because they all possess unity. The sea is shoreless, the sky domelike, the sun untainted, the desert undisturbed by human foot, the night one sheet of darkness, silence unbroken, the thunder-crash overpowering the ear and rolling on in continuous repeated peals, the stars myriads in number and

yet in the sameness of their shining *one multitude*, rest and repose undisturbed, energy and force unmovable, the infant formed into an outline flowing on in gentle undulation without break or angle, the giant solid and massive in his structure and firm as a rock: there is unity in all.

Thus the unity of time is eternity; unity of space, infinity; unity of goodness, perfect virtue; unity of knowledge, omniscience; unity of parts, order; unity of music, melody, harmony, and rhythm; unity of motion, grace; unity of figure, proportion; unity of the intellect, truth; unity of power, omnipotence; unity of taste generally, that which coincides with the figure created by our own imagination. Boundlessness and unity are identical: for wherever a limit exists, there of necessity the object before us becomes two—one on this side of the limit, the other on that. And boundlessness is the natural object of human desire. We long to break our chains, to defeat our antagonist, to overcome difficulties, to gain step after step of knowledge. Nothing satisfies us but infinity. Nothing frets us but that which opposes limits to our motions and our thoughts.

Are these hints sufficient to throw you on the farther examination of the problem, that the universal object of human desire (under whatever shape this desire may appear) is *unity?* And to this let it be added, that the desire of unity is not excited until we have been previously oppressed with a sense of plurality. Pain the best moralists recognise as the primary spring of desire. Thus, when Plato would rouse men to seek after the oneness of truth, he began by perplexing them with the inconsistencies and oppositions of falsehood. When you have been wearied with the imperfections of the world, you will delight to take refuge in one where no such imperfections exist. You must feel a fault before

you try to amend it; be conscious of sin before you long for holiness; be thwarted by antagonists before you make efforts to overcome them; be despised before you thirst for honour; sigh over your own weakness ere you exercise yourself to gain strength; be pained at the defects of art before you study to make it perfect.

But observe also that this desire of reducing disorder to order, disturbance to peace, doubt to certainty, weakness to power, confinement to infinity, in one word, of producing unity wherever we look, acts in two ways, according to the object which we contemplate. You may stand before a picture, complaining of the harsh contrasts in its colouring, the abrupt angularity of its outline, the distraction of its parts, the want of consistency in its story; and you may endeavour to rectify these faults, simply with the wish of producing a beautiful object, without any desire of appropriating it to yourself. You may sit before the representation of a tragedy, and delight in the unity of the plot, in the skill with which the author has overcome difficulties, in the nice dependence of the several parts, in the elevation of the characters, in their internal congruity with life, in the oneness of the poetry, decorations, and music; and all this without a thought of self. You are thinking of an object wholly out of yourself.

But, on the other hand, you may think of yourself. You may see *yourself* defective in such a quality, embarrassed by such a difficulty, mastered by such an opponent; wanting this field, or that book, or that tulip, to fill up some collection of your own, which you consider as a part of yourself, and by the perfection of which you measure your own importance, utility, superiority over others, perhaps even your own goodness and virtue. And just as you would desire to rectify a defect in a painting,

you would desire to fill up an analogous defect in yourself. You would be no less anxious to restore unity to your own character, mind, or existence, than to preserve it in any other object with which you were only concerned as a spectator.

It is of this latter kind that most of the desires of man are composed. They are selfish. They are the results of dissatisfaction with our own goodness, our own ignorance, our own possessions, our own influence. Self is the primary object with most men. Hence the principle of appropriation. Each man becomes a centre, drawing to himself every thing around him; adding house to house, and field to field; endeavouring to spread his influence, like an atmosphere, into infinite space, that nothing may oppose his will; struggling to bend down man and nature, and even law and truth itself, into obedience to himself; in one word, striving to give unity, and infinity, and perfection to his own distracted, hampered, mutilated mind. And does he ever succeed? Can he thus subject to himself the world beyond him? Can he even, when subjected, retain dominion over it? Grant that he could do both; give him omnipotence, give him eternity, give him omniscience, make him a God supreme—would man be happy? I answer, No. His life would be misery and despair. Man was not made to be God.

And yet I answer just as boldly, that until he is a God, his being is imperfect, and his existence a blank. Once more I place before you a paradox, a seeming contradiction; not idly, nor from any wish to make ostentatious mysteries, or to provoke curiosity, or rouse wonder, or attempt originality. But man himself is a paradox; and all truth which regards his nature must be a paradox likewise. And it is no little gain to learn this—no little advance towards humility, and self-distrust, and the reverential recep-

tion of greater truths from the lips of others, and to living in the world with a childlike spirit, willing to believe all things, and doubting nothing but ourselves—it is no little advance to such a spirit (how good a spirit I need not say), for us to be familiarised betimes with the great *mysteries* of our own nature. He who has once observed these, will startle at none other in Revelation.

Why, then, if man could be raised as man to the condition of a Supreme Being, by giving him perfect unity in all things, would he find in it only misery? In the first place, because it is an essential part of his nature that he should, as we before saw, have something external to himself on which to rest, to act, to contemplate. His mind is like his eye. It sees all things except itself. Like every other organ of his body, it is made for an outward use and purpose. And the moment it is turned inward on itself, it becomes disordered and pernicious. When you are conscious, said an eminent physician, that you possess any organ in your body—when it makes itself felt by its own internal action—be assured there is something wrong in it; as when a wheel grinds, or a spring stops in a machine. The beauty of all machinery is, that it should work smoothly, noiselessly, as a whole, without attention being drawn to itself; when, in fact, we can trust it to itself, and only delight in seeing the perfection with which it does its service. So it is with the mind. Turn it in upon itself, and it will devour itself with weariness and vexation. Hence solitary confinement drives men mad.

The air through which we see all things is itself invisible. The juice which digests all food is itself without taste. The mirror which reflects all images must have no image in itself. The hand which wields all instruments, has in itself little power but that of holding. The ground on which colours are

painted must itself be white. Matter, of which the world is thought to be made, is itself without shape, or bulk, or order, or quantity. And the mind, which is to receive and bear the impressions of the universe, must, at the time, know nothing of its own movement or nature. Till taken out of itself, it cannot fulfil its functions.

But this is not all. If the mind requires outward objects on which to rest, it also requires that they should be of a peculiar nature. They must be something really distinct from itself, not its own creation—not entirely within its own power—not thoroughly known. They must have a principle in them of *independent agency*—they must be living persons, not things. Place a man in a desert island—cover it with the most beautiful landscapes—fill it with the choicest fruits—let all the elements of nature be made to minister mechanically to his wants—let him see through the whole of it, and all that belongs to it, with an unerring eye,—and then tell him that here he is to live, in the midst of every indulgence that his senses, or fancy, or intellect can conceive, to all eternity, but alone, with no other animated being near him; and the man would commit suicide. All the treasures of Robinson Crusoe's raft were nothing compared with his dog and his parrot; and these were nothing compared with his faithful savage. And even with him, he longed for the sight of some civilised face. Why? because as a man he could not live without the consciousness that there was with him another being, not a part of himself, but an independent person, having a movement and spontaneity of its own; and the higher this being was raised in the scale of spontaneity—the more independent it was of him, the more a mystery beyond his reach—the more it satisfied him. Place a man in solitude.

He will find out something that has motion,—running water, passing clouds, or wavering foliage. So long as there is motion not originated by himself, he can give himself up to its contemplation with something like interest: he is not left to himself. Thus, a fire becomes a companion; an animal, as a dog, is even better—it is more independent; a human being still better; but a servant better than a slave, an adult than a child, a wise man than a fool, a great man than a weak man, a good man than a bad; because each is more raised above ourselves, is more entirely removed from our power, has more of spontaneity. Why did the poor prisoner in the dungeon delight in the sight of the spider, and shed tears when it died? Because that spider, petty and hideous as it was, was in some sense a person to him. It came to him with a will of its own. It had a being into which he could not penetrate. It was not made by him. Its thoughts, and feelings, and affections (for even these he could trace in its movements), were a mystery that he could not fathom. It excited his interest, kept up curiosity, pleased him by fulfilling doubtful anticipations, which, if they had been certain, would not have been formed, or have been fulfilled without any satisfaction, because there was no previous suspense. If it shewed gratitude, the gratitude was valued because it was spontaneous; for what would be the worth of gratitude, if we could make it by steam? It could be irritated, soothed, pleased, taught to imitate, frightened, made to suffer, killed. And all these were the signs of an original spontaneous power, wholly external to the poor prisoner who established his communion with it. So natural is it for man to have something of this kind associated with him, that a morbid imagination has been known to establish for itself such a communion

with a mere plant—to give it, as it were, a soul—to learn its movements and changes as a sort of language —to love it, as a living thing, and even to die when it died. Two children were placed in solitary confinement in Milbank Penitentiary. They each made up a sort of figure from the bed-clothes, and were found sleeping with it in their arms! Plato described this essential want of our nature in still stronger language.[1] He said that any individual human being was by himself only one half of a man, of whom the other half had been cut off; and that his nature could not be perfect till he had found out the other half, and united himself to it again. And so God himself declared that it was not good for man to be alone. And he has built society upon the conjunction of two human beings, and called those two one.

But this is not all. Consider what is the essential element which is required in this external object of human affection. It is power—power superior to ourselves. Every thing which is subject to us, which we can control, explain, see through, bend and twist as we like to our own purposes without resistance, becomes virtually and essentially a part of ourselves, and therefore a *thing*. It is our property. It loses its independent existence, and with it its power of charming us. Power, therefore, greater than our own is the object really necessary to our existence. We are by nature dependent beings—parasitical plants, which cannot live without some taller tree round which to twine ourselves. Hence all love begins with respect and fear. Hence the fascination of force. Hence men "desire a king;" honour a hero; worship a martyr; idolise the poet, or the orator who carries them away by his voice;

[1] Convivium.

sit with eyes fixed upon the sight of suffering, when suffering is well borne; flock to see a murderer, or witness an execution; measure greatness of mind by greatness of crimes, after the present fashion of our nauseous novel-writers;—any thing for the sight of power—a power greater than our own. And without this, the life of man were a weary, insipid, hopeless, desolate existence. Rather, it could not exist at all. No man ever lived—emperor, tyrant, pope, sultan, absolute as he may seem, with the whole world under his feet—who really stood upon the pinnacle of power, with nothing above him to support him. Look at every case of seeming absolute power, and you will trace behind the throne a minister, or a friend, or a wife, or a child, or a dwarf, or a jester, or a barber, or the public, or a priesthood, or a soldiery, or a mistress, before whom the master of millions was himself a servant. We are born to be slaves: we are fit for nothing else: our happiness lies in subjection. No moments are so full of true joy, of real greatness, as when a nation gives itself up to its sovereign, a wife swears obedience to her husband, a saint abandons himself to his God. What are the transports of all human affection but efforts to debase and enslave ourselves before the object whom we love?

And therefore it is, that if to-morrow man were made the supreme being in the universe, creator instead of creature, ruler instead of servant, the worshipped from being the worshipper, his condition would become a hell. He cannot be God.

And yet, consider again, to be happy, he must be God. Look once more at that wonderful power within him, the power of fancy—that power by which that little mind stretches itself out, coil after coil, spring beyond spring,—never exhausted, never bounded, shooting past all limit of space and time and

number,—creating world upon world, peopling them all, still finding in all of them defects, still thirsting to remove them—restless, unsatisfied, and miserable, without infinity to fill it. For what purpose is this gigantic power, thus capable of bearing the universe on its shoulders,—of grasping the whole circle of things created and things uncreated, possible and impossible—of towering up even to the throne of the Almighty, and looking down from above it,—to what purpose has God placed this enormous power within the frail flesh of man, if it is not to be satisfied? For it cannot be extinguished. You cannot tear it out of the mind, as some foul weed, and throw it away. You may control, moderate, direct it to good objects, stay it for a time. But it is an essential part of man's nature; growing out of the same root with his best and noblest affections, working with the same springs on which his reason and perception turn. And for the same reason it is universal. Take a beggar from the street, or a child from its toy. Ask him what he wishes; and he answers, to have every thing that he likes. He conceives a world, and places himself in it as its master. His likings may indeed be poor. But so far as his view extends, he would obliterate all resistance to his will, and would be absolute lord and monarch of the whole universe which he surveys, with the power prospectively of indulging any change of inclination that may arise. In one word, he would be a god; and nothing short of this will content him.

Or, take an instance of another kind. Ask a doting mother, when hanging over her child, the nature of her wishes for that child. Are they short of giving to it every good, of making it a god? Is there any particle of imperfection—imperfection of body, of heart, of intellect, of power, of gifts,

internal and external, which, if her prayers were heard, would attach to this object of her affections? Would she not make it a god?

It is the wise saying of a sound philosophy, that whatever desire Nature has really implanted in the heart of man is intended to be fulfilled. And there can be no stronger proof of man's ultimate destination to some most exalted function in the universe, than this unquenchable thirst for infinite perfection in all things. But how is it to be realised without ending in disappointment and misery? It is realised every day so far as the mere feeling of man is concerned. Let us look into common life, and see how Nature solves this great problem, though the solution lasts only for a time, where the affections of men are set upon objects of a transient and imaginary value. It will bring us to an important conclusion.

First, then, Nature never does solve it when the desires of men are set originally on making *themselves gods*. No man ever yet reached even for a moment the height of satisfaction, when his object was to procure *for himself* infinite wealth, or infinite power, or infinite knowledge, or infinite pleasure, or infinite honour, or even infinite goodness. The self before his eyes mars every thing, and nothing but a perpetual fever and perpetual disappointment await him. His life is indeed that of Tantalus.

But take a man out of himself. Set before him a being whom he honours and admires, whom his imagination will therefore picture as perfect—as divine (it is the common language of love). Let it be a sovereign of loyal subjects—a philosopher whom the student idolises as an oracle of wisdom—a saint whom superstition has surrounded with a halo of supernatural glory—a woman whom a lover's fancy has invested with the name as well as attributes of

divinity; let the whole being and affection of the worshipper be absorbed in the reverent contemplation of this perfect object, and you will recognise at once, even in the fondest excess of such a reverence, a germ and principle of goodness and of happiness which wants only one other condition to make it perfect. See what a change is made in the frame and temper of the whole man, the instant he is taken out of himself by the presence of a noble object in which his admiration rests:

> " Love lives not alone, immured in the brain;
> But, with the motion of all elements,
> Courses as swift as thought in every power,
> And gives to every power a double power,
> Above their functions and their offices.
> It adds a precious seeing to the eye;
> A lover's eye will gaze an eagle blind;
> A lover's ear will hear the lowest sound,
> When the suspicious head of theft is stopp'd;
> Love's feeling is more soft and sensible
> Than are the tender horns of cockled snails;
> Love's tongue proves dainty Bacchus gross in taste.
> For valour, is not love a Hercules,
> Still climbing trees in the Hesperides?
> Subtle as sphinx; as sweet and musical
> As bright Apollo's lute strung with his hair;
> And when love speaks, the voice of all the gods
> Makes heaven drowsy with the harmony."
>
> *Love's Labour's lost*, act iv. sc. 3.

What may be the real nature of the object which he believes thus perfect, matters little, so long as he believes it perfect. It throws him into an attitude of reverence; and then the brightness of the object falls upon himself, pervades every portion of his nature, and transmutes him, rouses him into a new being.

But something is still wanting. The thought of self sooner or later must intrude. The eye must turn at times from the heavens to the earth—from

the palace in which the being whom we honour dwells, to the hovel in which we are dwelling ourselves—from the glorious character, which we delight in contemplating, to our own ignorance, or meanness, or guilt. Self-consciousness, sooner or later, will force its way; and will become more bitter from the contrast of the spectacles. How is it to be alleviated? I answer, Nature points out. She makes us stretch out our hands to the being whom we reverence; throw ourselves at his feet, humble ourselves in his presence, busy ourselves in his service, in bringing him gifts, studying his will, watching every movement of his eye; and all this with one hope and longing, that he may look down upon us, and recognise us as something which he values, as a part of himself. And when he does thus recognise us, then it is that we can draw off to ourselves the whole perfection of his nature, without diminishing or altering it. We become, as Plato says, wise by his wisdom, good by his goodness, great by his power, holy by his holiness, honoured by his honour, happy by his happiness, glorious by his glory, divine by his divinity. Once feel that he loves us, and all that he possesses immediately becomes ours. We are taken into his nature, attached to him as a hand to the body, become his. For it is not, remember,—and the distinction is vital,—it is not a struggle to make him ours, to obtain possession of him, that he may be a part of ourselves; for then we should destroy that very superiority, and independence, and spontaneity, which is the object that we admire. Wherever love takes this form, it is not love, but some baser passion—selfish and adulterated. Real love seeks not to aggrandise itself, but the being whom it loves. It elevates him in every way; delights in his honour, thanks him for his glory, rejoices in denying itself,

would make the whole world bow down before him, and bow down itself the first, thinking no office mean, and proud even of its own humiliation. It is to be

> "All made of faith and service;
> All made of passion;
> All adoration, duty, and observance,
> All humbleness, all patience, and impatience,
> All purity, all trial, all obeisance."
>
> *As You like It*, act v. s. 2.

And therefore the school-moralists, who, before this, have made the happiness of man consist in *possessing God*, have erred in an essential point. It consists, rather, in being possessed by God—in being made a part of himself. And the religion which takes not this form, however deep and true its earnestness for union with God, will end ultimately in fanaticism and irreverence.

But make one more distinction. Remember the contrast between a state of desire and a state of possession. Compare the anxious, doubtful, feverish, fretful, disappointed temper which accompanies the struggle to attain an object, and the rejoiced, satisfied, manly, contented, tranquil frame of mind of him who possesses it already,—and which shall we choose? Place before us an Infinite Being, infinite in all perfections, possessing therefore the highest unity. Let our whole heart be attracted by admiration of him. Let the thought of our own want of unity then rise up—of our weakness, that is, and sins, and ignorance, and dangers,—then let the eye turn up again, longing that a look may be cast down from that height of heights, to irradiate our own darkness, elevate our own meanness, purify our own pollution, ennoble our own corrupt nature, by recognising it as a part and parcel of a nature which is perfect. Will this be the extent of our wishes?

Or could we imagine something still beyond—that when the self-distrusting, remorseful mind was thus harassed and ashamed, and full of desire, something there might be to declare, that what he longed for was given him already—that the look had been cast down on him from his birth—that he had been already recognised as a portion of this all-perfect and all-divine Being; admitted individually into his favour, united to his affection, made a member of his body? Look into the human heart in all those moments—few, indeed, but never to be forgotten—moments of its purest joy and noblest energies, when man learns for the first time that he is loved and honoured by the Being whom he has loved and honoured himself—and compare this with the days that preceded it; and then you may see the value of that rite of the Catholic Church, which seals and ensures to every baptised Christian, by an outward sign, confirmed by the testimony of his senses, and of which he cannot doubt, the gift, from his earliest infancy, of that Holy Spirit of God—one, and perfect, and infinite, and eternal—by which he is united to God himself, as a limb is united to the body, and is made a "member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." Is it better, more adapted to his happiness and goodness, more like a dispensation of perfect love, that this gift should be vouchsafed him from the beginning, that he may look back from day to day, with joy and gratitude, on the certainty of possessing it; or that it should be held before his eyes to torture him, through a weary life, with a pursuit, in which each step must be a failure, and every failure full of despair?

"For Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened, but it is also a sign of regeneration or new birth,

whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism rightly are grafted into the Church; the promises of forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed; faith is confirmed, and grace increased by virtue of prayers unto God. And the baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ."[1]

[1] Article xxvii.

CHAPTER XVIII.

But you will say (at least if you have been brought up under the miserable influence of this unbelieving age), all this is only the profession of the Church. True (for my own consciousness declares it), that I bear within me an evil power which enthrals me, and which must be laid prostrate and killed, before I can escape into freedom. True also, that I am bowed down and humbled by a sense of shame and ill desert in the presence of an all-pure Being, and I must be cleansed before I can look up. True also, that my whole nature is tormented with doubt, and imperfection, and distraction, and can only be appeased and satisfied by absorption into the being of one who shall be in himself truth, goodness, light, and holiness, and shall communicate them to me by an effluence from his own perfection. And in discerning all these wants, and devising what is necessary to supply them, the Church may indeed be embodying profound philosophy—profounder than any which ever appeared before it. But I want a proof that its promises are true—that the whole is not a delusion. Where is the evidence that the power of evil within me really is destroyed—that my sins really are forgiven—that God really is imparted to me by the waters of baptism?

To give this proof does not belong properly to the ethical teacher. It is rather the business of the theologian, or perhaps of ecclesiastical history. And there was a time, when to require it, would prove a mind unworthy of receiving it.

When the Church, as it once did, stood before men in its full stature, bearing upon it all the features and insignia of a divinely constituted power and ambassador of God, and acknowledged as such by all that was wise and great among men, to dispute her word was the mark of a presuming and rebellious spirit, and deserved little more than chastisement. But in these present days, her power humbled, her body mutilated, her voice struck dumb, her history unknown, her noblest faculties torpid with disuse, her name a byword among the nations, we may well pardon the man who asks for some proof of her assertions. Doubt is no longer a self-evident offence against humility and trustfulness. It is to be pitied more than punished. And until the Church once more has put forth her strength, arrayed herself in her real attributes of power, and made her claims known and felt throughout the world, she has no right whatever to complain of those who look upon her suspiciously, or even with alarm. And therefore I will stop to say a few words in answer to the question, If the promises of the Church are realised.

Remember, then, the only logical and philosophical mode of proceeding, when such a doubt arises. Do not begin with asking the grounds for believing. Whatever you are told, you have a reason to believe, until something occurs which should make you distrust it. And this is your real question: What reason have I for doubting? Is it that such mighty blessings cannot be conveyed through a little simple form? But we have seen that the simplest form, the merest trifle, when established by competent authority, may become the instrument of incalculable power. Is it that man is too unworthy to be the channel of a divine inspiration? But God does communicate with man daily and hourly.

All knowledge, all life, all goodness, all power, all association with himself, all participation in his blessings, must come to us *ultimately* from God. But *immediately* they do not come. No man hath either seen or heard him. They come to us through man. Man is the appointed mediator. Our parents give us life, our teachers knowledge, our education goodness, our government power, our Church communion with God. But in all it is man, or rather God through the form of man, who takes us, and brings us to the presence of God, and brings down the light of heaven to our eyes and hearts. Therefore, that in this greatest work of all, the work of imparting to us freedom, and forgiveness, and membership with God—that in this, also, man should be the agent, and God should not appear directly, is not a strange event, but one in closest analogy with the whole system of our experience. But can this Divine Spirit be communicated through the hands of evil men? Good men may have the power; but can it belong to an evil man, simply because he is commissioned to be a minister of the Church? Look again at the system of Nature, and see if the sins of men render them incapable of acting as channels of the divine blessing. Where is the man without sin? And yet God does employ them under Nature, as well as under the Gospel, to proclaim his truth, to make known his will, to bring men to himself; he does raise them up to speak forth words which are the inspiration of his Spirit, because they are good and true, and all goodness and all truth can come from none but him, and to put those words, and therefore that Spirit, into the hearts of others, notwithstanding their own hearts are corrupt. The weakness and unworthiness of the channel through which this Spirit is conveyed even commends and enforces it: no lessons of goodness come with such

force as from the reluctant confessions of one who cannot practise them. No homage to virtue is so great as that which is paid by hypocrisy. Nothing proves more clearly, that to make men good is the gift of God, than the employment of ministers for that purpose, who can derive no power from their own goodness.

But I do not see the effects. Men are baptised by the Church, and I see sin still struggling within them; they are still punished as guilty in this world; I discern no trace within them of any nature greater than their own. The result belies the promise.—This is the common stumbling-block. But think for a moment. Are you not mistaking the promise? No where is it made unconditionally. It does not say, or dream of saying, that this work of perfecting our nature is accomplished fully and finally in those who survive it long by the one rite of baptism, unless man does his part afterwards, to preserve what has there been given. There is a struggle still to come; and in this man is to do his part. A physician stands by a sick-bed—he promises a dying man that a medicine will cure him, and prolong his life for years, if he takes such and such precautions against a relapse. The patient takes the medicine, forgets the precaution, falls sick again, and dies; and we go away, and pronounce that the physician deceived him. I give a man a draft upon my banker; promise him that it will procure him such a sum, if he presents it as it is. He suffers it to be defaced, the name to be obliterated; and when he presents it, payment is refused. He charges me with having imposed on him. I promise a drowning man, that if he takes refuge in my boat, he will yet be saved. He afterwards falls again into the water; and I am told that my words were false.

Is this the reasoning of a rational being, or of a heart blinded by some strange delusion? That baptised Christians, therefore, do often fail in finally securing the promises made to them by the Church, is no proof that those promises have not been originally fulfilled.

But the blessings themselves are things which I cannot bring perfectly before me. They are neither seen nor felt. I am not conscious of their presence in others, nor in myself. I cannot bring them under experience. It is easy to make a promise which none can charge with non-fulfilment, because none can detect whether it is fulfilled or not. It is as if a man should pledge himself to turn into a mass of silver, not a piece of clay before my eyes, but a stone in the centre of the earth where no one can penetrate. What should we say of a prophet who only prophesied of things which no one could live to experience? If cloven tongues of fire were now brought down from heaven, and made to rest upon the head of every child brought to the font, we should believe. But the case is far otherwise. All that is wrought is wrought in secret, and no eye can trace it.—And to this I answer, that if you claim to trace it by your own eyes—to bring the fact under your own individual observation, you must first make yourself competent to observe it. When I engage by the help of a freezing mixture to change water into ice, I do not engage to make it visible to a blind man. When I promise to give a poor man relief, it is no part of my promise that you, the by-stander, should be present and witness the gift. The only competent judge whether it is given or not, is the person who receives it. Look for it, therefore, in your own heart only; for you have no right to decide by reference to any other case. And in this

you have no right to say that the promise itself has failed, until you yourself have fulfilled the conditions to which it was attached.

And what am I to look for? What are the signs of the presence within me of this wondrous and mysterious blessing, this new creation, this communication of God's nature?—Here also you must guard against mistake. If you think it is peace, and joy, and exalted feeling, and absence of temptation to evil, and the consciousness of a new heart, and facility in doing good, and a perceptible change of taste and temper, you may, perhaps, have reason to doubt if any can be detected. And you may as frequently have reason to suppose, that the gift promised has been vouchsafed and is possessed at the very time when it is departed. There is but one infallible sign of its presence. When you are able to resist yourself—when you are denying your own inclinations, restraining the wanderings of your fancy, cutting short your desires, fighting against temptation,—then be assured there is something within you which is not yourself, and which, inasmuch as it is battling with evil, must have come from God. And whenever you recognise this power within you as the voice of Him into whose body you were brought by baptism, and obey it as His, then be assured it is His voice, and He is really and truly within you. If you ask why these are infallible proofs of this great fact, bringing it under the range of your consciousness, just as much as the facts of an external world, cognisable to the senses by the resistance which they offer to you,—I say, first, that those who have looked the deepest into human nature have never recognised in it any motive or propelling principle but pleasure and pain, or rather pain only; for, when pleasure seems to move us, it acts through the immediate agency of desire, and

desire is preceded by want, and want is attended with pain. Now, whenever we are acting with a view to relieve ourselves from pain, we are not resisting ourselves; there is no self-denial; the motive is, after all, selfish. A very enlightened self-interest, a very warm and naturally pure heart, a highly cultivated reason, might and would bring men to perform the most noble acts of virtue, and even seemingly of self-devotion. But if, on tracing back the feeling, we can reduce it to a desire of personal gratification, or the influence of our own selfish desire, it ceases to be self-denial, or to exhibit a real power of resistance. Probably nearly all the heathen virtues, however heroic they seem, were of this kind. Men were bartering, as Plato expresses it,[1] pleasure for pleasure, pain against pain, acting temperately because intemperance was disgusting, dying for their country because such a death was honourable, indulging liberality because it was an indulgence, serving their friends because their friends were a part of themselves, cultivating knowledge because knowledge was a source of happiness. And in all this there was no recognition of a law external to themselves, which they were bound and struggled to obey even against their will; while obedience was painful, and promised no result, and seemed identical with no good. But it is possible for a Christian to see that he is surrounded by a number of positive commands, hemming him in, and fettering him in every movement—to be impelled by warm passions to break through them, and yet patiently and reverently, and almost blindly, to submit himself to them, without yet being able to taste the pleasure of obedience, and without any attempt to calculate the good results. This is the elevated principle of virtue at which Plato aims, and which constitutes true

[1] Phædo.

resistance to self. It is real self-denial. Modern moralists have been accustomed to regard it as fanciful and enthusiastic, and even to deny the possibility of such actions. But it is evident that there are instances in which it does exist. Take the case of a mother, to whom the very existence of her child is a law, commanding her to sacrifice every thing for its good. Take the case of St. Paul, who was willing to be anathema for the sake of his brethren. Take any one who toils and labours on through a life of anxiety in discharge of some positive duty. Ask him why he does it, and he will answer, not that such sacrifices are good, or expedient, or pleasing, or honourable, but that he has before him a law, which binds him to obedience; which he follows willingly, so far as that his reason never rebels against it; but it is still a hard and painful labour, a mighty struggle, without a thought of self. And if it be true that nature has given us no impelling principle but pain, and yet men are found to act not only without pain, but in the face of it, the miracle is assuredly as great as if a river ran backward to its source, or a stone rose up in the air. It is a suspension — it is more than suspension — it is a contradiction of the laws of Nature, and proves that there is a power working within man higher than Nature.

But secondly, to recognise the obligation of a law, we must recognise the existence of a lawgiver. It is the lawgiver who really is the law. Men are not bound to duties by parchment-bonds or statute-books, but by the voice and soul which speaks in them. And to recognise a lawgiver as a Being standing over us with a right to our obedience, implies a knowledge of his nature; it implies more, an admiration for his nature—some degree of affection for it, and consequently, an affinity with it.

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. xi. 11). Aristotle lays down the principle that we can have no knowledge of any thing without possessing within us something like it of the same nature. It is certain we never desire any thing without possessing some portion of it already. Give a man some knowledge, he longs to increase it. Make him rich, he becomes avaricious. The more righteous he becomes, the more he hungers and thirsts after righteousness. Without goodness within himself, he cannot interpret or perceive goodness in others. Without measuring endeavours of his own, he cannot estimate the exertions of those around him. It is, as Plato himself declares, by a sort of consanguinity, relationship, συγγένεια, that we are attached to all that is good. And those in whom this divine nature does not exist are wholly incapable of undertaking or seeking for communion with, or endeavouring to obey, the divine nature which is above them. Hence the love of Christ is a proof that Christ is in us. Faith in him is an infallible sign that he has already imparted himself to us. Acknowledgment of his laws must be preceded by an union with his body. "No man cometh to God, except the Spirit of God draw him." And therefore, when you find that you really are able to act no longer by impulse or feeling, but by a real independent power, recognising Christ as your Master, you may rest in this as an assurance, that what the Church has promised is true; and that it really has communicated to you the Spirit of God, and made you a member of Christ's body.

I will not stop to point out, that thus the proof of the fact is wrapt up necessarily in the very condi-

tions, without which you have no right to decide whether the fact is fulfilled or not. The Church bids you make a struggle, and realise in your mind the sense of Christ's presence as your Master. Unless you are doing this, you have no right whatever to pronounce on the promises of the Church. If you are doing this, then you have the proof within you, and cannot mistake it.

But I will rather suggest the consideration of the vastness of the power claimed by the Church—a power which places it almost on a level with God himself,—the power of forgiving sins, by wiping them out in baptism—of transferring souls from heaven to hell, without admitting a doubt of it, as when "baptised infants, it is said, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved,"—the power of bringing down the Spirit of God from heaven, and incorporating it in the persons of frail and fleshly man. Think, I say, of this stupendous power; and then ask if any human being could dare to assume it without authority from God himself. If such authority has never been given, then the Church, in every one of its most solemn acts, is guilty of the most frightful blasphemy that man can conceive. If it has been given, is it not a fearful thing to make light of or dispute it? And when, in this dull, cold, mechanical age, men say that the age of miracles is gone by, that the time is past for spiritual gifts, and the deification of men, and supernatural communication, and all the dreams, as they dare to call them, of the superstitious infancy of the world,—remember that even now the Church is upon earth claiming every day, and exercising, the same stupendous power as it exercised in the first ages of Christianity. And though the world has grown old, and faith is waxing faint, and the power of vision is departing, and man's being is

sinking down into a dead shell and husk of matter, emptied of the glorious spirit which once seemed to animate and colour it; still before our eyes there is a daily miracle working, and a divine power as strong as at its first appearance, and a body perpetuating the inheritance of a supernatural gift, and a communication open between heaven and earth. And those who are sick and wearied with the emptiness of the natural world, may still take refuge in a world which is beyond Nature, and before it, and above it.

But you will say, how can such mighty gifts be given to such weak and sinful creatures as man? That God should form them, guide them, lay down laws for their conduct, and teach them their duty and end, we can easily conceive. But that he should condescend to impart to them his own Divine nature, and unite them to himself so closely, in preference to all the rest of his spiritual creatures, this seems strange and impossible.—And yet our Saviour's words cannot easily be evaded: "And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me" (John xvii. 22, 23). And before the face of a Creator all creatures must be upon the same level—all be equally unworthy of mercies which must flow from purely spontaneous grace. In beings wholly at our disposal, whom we have made and can destroy at will, all power is purely derivative; and none, therefore, can take the form of greater or less desert. If, indeed, any part of the creation might seem to attract more strongly the love of God, it would be that which most called for compassion, where there was the greatest suffering, and the most

formidable danger. And this part would seem to be the earth. And, as we shall see presently, the very abjectness and misery of man may be an essential element in the formation of a being, made to wield great power in a position of derivative authority. And there is no trace of neglect upon earth, as if man and his affairs and interests were too little to be noticed by God. On the contrary, the whole of Nature is full of the most minute and carefully elaborated contrivances for his good, and precautions against his ruin. That spot where the Son of God came down to preach, and to die, and to found a church, small as it may seem and insignificant, compared with the infinity of space around it, must have been the centre of the universe; the point on which all eyes were fixed, and on which the destiny of the universe was decided. And it requires no vast stage or amphitheatre to realise stupendous acts. The earth may be the mere closet of the universe, and yet in that the fate of the universe may have been determined. And the tendency of man's fancy to connect magnitude of space and time with the real intrinsic magnitude of events, is but a delusion. Three hours are but a drop in the ocean of eternity, and a wooden cross but a point in the infinity of space; and yet they were sufficient to complete on them the great miracle of man's redemption. It is but little in bulk, says Aristotle of the human mind; but it is of infinite value. A vast external fabric is, indeed, appended to it; but as we trace up vitality to its source, we see less and less of material dimensions, until at last the mind itself retires wholly from the eye, and has neither parts, nor figure, nor bulk at all.

So the whole earth is hung round one impalpable point, the centre of gravitation. So the whole universe rolls round some central atom, which, if

shifted, will derange the whole. So societies are gathered round some one individual. So the whole fate of man, for hundreds of generations, has turned upon the eating of an apple. Space and time have no connexion with the real magnitude and importance of events. None but a sensual eye takes them as a measure of value. Saul was higher by the shoulders than all the rest of the people; and David was a stripling. Man would choose the one for king, and God the other.

And thus no internal objection is valid against the promises of the Church; and all which is required to confirm them is a positive declaration and commission from God; a fact to be proved by historical testimony only, and traced, like all the other doctrines of revelation, from the present up to the Catholic Church, from the Catholic Church to the body of the Apostles, from the Apostles to Christ, and from Christ to God. And the nearer you approach to the apostolic age, the more vivid and striking is the light in which the mystery of the sacraments is placed, the more prominent the ground they occupy, the more awful the language in which they are described; as if they were the great treasure committed to the keeping of the Church; and not merely a metaphysical creed relating to the nature of God, nor a code of laws tending to the government of man.

CHAPTER XIX.

LET us, however, return to the precise nature of the miracle wrought in us by baptismal regeneration, when it is said that we are thereby made members of Christ, and united with God through the inspiration of his Holy Spirit.

Unity was in all things, we found, the essence of beauty and goodness. Union with a divine Being the highest and truest object of human desire. When a man looks upon himself, and discerns a defect in his possessions, an obstacle to his wishes, an irregularity or weakness in his nature, he struggles to remove the discordance and limit, and to bring himself to unity of being; to make himself perfect, infinite in power, in goodness, and in knowledge. And when he contemplates another Being, whom he reverences and admires, and discerns any thing apparently defective—any disobedience to his will, any thing at variance with his nature,—upon the very same principle he struggles to remove it. Hence the efforts of love, and loyalty, and filial affection, to place the object of their love at the head of all things—to reduce every thing before it—to resent and punish every contempt or rebellion, which destroys the unity and perfection of the Being whom we delight to contemplate.

Hence it is, that upon love and faith follows necessarily obedience. It is implied in the very act of love. Hence, also, in obedience is implied the desire that all our thoughts, words, and actions, should be shaped and moulded by God, without the slightest resistance—that our independent being

should be almost absorbed in his, as the spontaneous movement of the hand is actuated by the will of the mind. I am your servant, your child, your slave, your instrument, ready to obey your every command, waiting to catch the slightest wish, flying to do your commission wherever you send me—this is the language of human love, wherever it occurs. Make use of me—consider me as your own—my will is subject to yours—you are lord, master, queen, supreme over all my being. My whole independent existence is absorbed in yours; and my life shall be devoted to the work of bringing all others into the same subjection.

Hence, also, zeal for God's glory is the necessary accompaniment of obedience. There must be indignation at the disobedience of others, pain at contempt offered to God, resentment against his enemies. The first offer of a loyal subject to his king is his sword. And when, in the middle ages, religion and love became the ruling passions of mankind, it took from the same cause the form of chivalry.

And yet, it will readily occur, as soon as perfect unity is attained, man's happiness vanishes. Consider for a moment. Ask why toy after toy, object after object, for which man struggles through life, is thrown away as valueless the moment it is possessed—why man fights with the energy of a giant, but when the battle is won sinks down in apathy—why the first days of requited affection are happier than years that follow—why the ambitious thinks nothing of the honour which he has reached, and looks only to something higher—why the miser is never contented—why knowledge palls—why pleasure satiates—why desire is restless—"why man is never blest, but always to be blest?" Content and acquiescence with the present seems impossible to

man. And hence human reason, looking forward to the promised happiness of eternity, has been compelled to conceive of it, though by a contradiction unintelligible and inexplicable, as of an infinite series of progressions in goodness and knowledge, through a never-ending series of ascending states of being. How to make man contented, is the first problem of philosophy. Observe the conditions necessary to solve it. He must have constantly a want to be supplied, an evil to be removed, an advance to be made. And this want and evil must be deeply felt; and there must be great difficulty in producing the unity desired, or there will be little satisfaction attending success. And this must be renewed from day to day, as Paley proposes to produce happiness, by the continual creation of new wants, and the satisfaction of them by new successes. And this cannot be carried on through all eternity without coming to some end. And it is also impossible to be reconciled with the consciousness of perfect happiness—of possessing all that we desire. Infinite desire and infinite possession, how are they compatible?

And yet Christianity has accomplished even this. It places man by nature in the lowest imaginable condition; for no degradation can be greater than that of a moral agent bound down by sin. It makes him helpless, ignorant, impotent, and hopeless; but with an insatiable craving for boundless power, knowledge, and goodness. It then unites him to a Being possessing all these perfections; but, remember, without destroying man's own individuality. The Oriental philosophy, as well as Christianity, speaks of the union of man with God, as the highest end and good. But it describes man's life as *absorbed* and *lost* in the Deity, so that consciousness no longer survives. It is, to use their ordinary language, as

if a bottle of water were broken, and the water mingled with the river; as if a ray of light flowed back into the sun, and were lost in it, so as never to be separated again. But Christianity preserves the individuality of man, by retaining his own nature, and the recollection of its corruption and misery; and yet combines it with God so closely, as to produce the most perfect union which man can conceive; and which it typifies by the marriage-state, by that bond of connexion which makes woman "bone of man's bone, and flesh of his flesh." If the union were less complete, man's desire of approximation to the Being whom he loves would not be satisfied. If it were more, the weakness of man would be lost in the greatness of God, and the greatness of God would cease to be an object of infinite admiration; and with the loss of this, man's happiness would cease also; or rather his consciousness would cease; for consciousness cannot exist without the perception of two things—of ourselves, and of something without us. When I speak of myself, I feel and express a distinction between myself and something which is not myself. When I speak of other things, I feel also that I have an existence besides and beyond them. And consciousness becomes happiness, when it passes from the contemplation of an imperfect object to one that is perfect; it is keen enjoyment when difficulty, doubt, or danger, have stood in the way, and yet are removed. It is enhanced by the degree of imperfection, when the perfection is in proportion; when, for instance, infinite misery is followed by infinite happiness. Evil, therefore, is a necessary element in it. The sense of this may be kept up by the constant recollection of past misery, and of present helplessness if left to ourselves. And yet it may be constantly balanced by the sense of certain present good—good which covers all the suffer-

ing of the past, and removes all disquietude for the future. And thus it is possible to conceive how man, under the dispensation of Christ, may be happy to all eternity, with a perpetual thirst and yet perpetual satisfaction; happy as an individual person, and yet completely bound up and dependent on another Being; still looking back without weariness, and forward without impatience; contemplating God in himself, and himself in God; feeling that he is man, and yet also that he is divine; standing close on the throne of heaven, yet never forgetting his own infinite nothingness; exercising almighty power with the most unfeigned humility; and traversing from hour to hour, with a never-wearied eye, the distance between himself and his Maker, without any dissatisfaction or any satiety.

But to preserve this distinction, let us remember, self-abasement, shame, consciousness of sin, the sense of entire helplessness, and absolute dependence upon God, are necessary. No man can be exalted, without being previously humbled. All the Christian doctrines which speak of man's natural corruption, of the grievousness of sin, of the wrath of God, of the atonement, of judgment, of punishment, of justification only through the merits of our Lord,—all bear upon this point, and interpose between man and God to prevent the presumption, which might follow on the counterbalancing doctrines of the sacraments. And thus here also, as so often before, let us observe that the law of perfection consists in holding two things together, distinct without being divided; in reconciling plurality with unity. The Oriental philosophy holds unity without plurality. It would merge the individual man in the abyss of God's nature, and destroy his separate existence. The common religions of the world keep men apart from God by sin and shame, and cannot

comprehend the union. They err by maintaining plurality. The Catholic doctrine asserts both the union of man with God, and the preservation of man's individuality. It neither confounds nor divides. It does not profess to explain; but it boldly asserts the fact, and provides for its accomplishment in a way which human reason could not have devised, and which none but divine power could have realised.

And, once more, observe how it embodies in the person of every baptised Christian a mystery fully as inexplicable as that which is laid as the foundation of Catholic doctrine, and from which the rationalist turns with ignorant contempt.

Every individual Christian (perhaps it may be said that every man in the workings of his intellect) realises in his own mind the fact of a Trinity in Unity, and an Unity in Trinity. Perhaps it is in this sense chiefly, that he is said to have been created in the image of God. In every act of Christian consciousness — consciousness, that is, of his relation to God in Christ — there is within him a thinking power or person, which he calls himself. But this thinking power, in order to think at all, must be contemplating something. He is contemplating, first, himself in his own natural state of want, misery, and helplessness. From this he passes on to contemplate the same self, as he is in God. Here are three distinct persons, as distinct as can be imagined; and the very act of thinking implies that they are so; since an object to be contemplated must be distinct from the faculty which contemplates it; and a relation, to be perceived, must exist between two distinct things; as, for instance, being myself in my natural, and myself in my Christianised, condition. I must regard the two as separate from each other, otherwise no relation is discoverable between them.

And yet these three are one. The I who contemplate, am the same with the I who am contemplated—the natural man is one with the Christianised man. If they were not one and the same, there would be no satisfaction in tracing the relation between them. And the very subject of contemplation is the union of these three distinct persons. "I live," says St. Paul; "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20).

This deep mystery in the constitution of the human mind has engaged the attention of many modern philosophers, who have examined the theory of consciousness, especially in Germany. It is not to be used as a confirmation, or illustration, or explanation of the great and solemn mystery of Christianity; for who would dare to draw analogies between the essential nature of God and the finite mind of man? Let me most anxiously guard against any such abuse. But it is a satisfactory rebuke to those who would deny the Christian mystery, as if it were contrary to reason. If it be so, then man's existence is also contrary to reason; for a mystery equally unintelligible to us, yet palpably a fact, is involved in every act of consciousness. It occurs also, where we should expect to find it, in the metaphysical speculations of Aristotle, and is also undoubtedly hinted at in Plato. Aristotle expressly says, that in every act of thought "the mind which contemplates, and the object contemplated," the τὸ νοῦν and τὸ νοούμενον, are the same. They both coexist in one and the same subject, as the convex and concave form are united in one and the same line. And in his theory of friendship, which he would make essential to human happiness, if not its highest good, he states that to form a perfect friendship, three conditions are required—two distinct persons, to reciprocate the affection; and yet in these distinct per-

sons the greatest possible equality, similarity, and communion, ἰσότης, ὁμοιότης, and κοινότης.[1] They must be separate, and yet one. And he traces, as we have traced, the delight of friendship and love to the act by which the mind contemplates the object which it loves, as distinct from itself, and yet as united to itself—as a second self.

There is another observation to be made respecting this Catholic doctrine of the union of man with God through the sacraments of the Church.

When the Church declares that baptism cleanses from the stain of sin, and makes us at that moment pure and acceptable, justified and righteous in the sight of God, we might very justly be content with its proving that God himself had sanctioned such a declaration, and not require to know the way in which the work of justification was accomplished. But when this question is asked, it is answered by the same fact of our being by baptism united to Christ. We have seen how man's sense of his own weakness, misery, and imperfection, is soothed at once by his union with a Being of infinite perfection; how there is a power in goodness, as in evil, to flow over beyond itself, and cover every thing which is brought into a certain contact with it. When the woman touched the hem of our Saviour's garment, the healing influence with an electrical rapidity passed into her diseased frame. It is like the widow's cruise of oil. Bring all the vessels that can be procured, it will fill them all. Set down thousands of famished men, place them in communication with the Apostles, and the Apostles with our Lord, and the five loaves will feed them all. It is a law not of Christianity only, but of Nature. The organisation of the world, in all its parts, is carried on upon the principle of gathering vast masses of

[1] Ethics, lib. 8.

useless, worthless matter round some one central point, in which all power and virtue resides, and from which this power proceeds, permeating and holding together every particle, and forming by its own mysterious inspiration and communication (a communication which the eye cannot trace, nor the reason understand), one vast, beautiful, and noble whole out of a concrete of paltry atoms. Where resides the life of the tree? Not in the leaves, not in the branches, not in the fruit; for strip them from the trunk, and their vitality is lost. Where is the life of the human frame? Not in the head, the foot, the eye, or the ear; for amputate them, and they putrefy. That there is a vital principle somewhere, of some kind, from which all the animal movements of the frame are propagated, we all know. But the material atoms which it holds together change and evaporate every seven years. Still the vital principle continues. But what, and where it is, we cannot tell; we only trace it and describe it by its effects. So also human reason. Think of the vast amount of facts and ideas collected and thrown into order, and incorporated in a mind of powerful intellect, and constituting its wisdom and excellence. Detach these facts from his thinking principle, dissolve their systematic connexion, and they crumble into a chaos of unintelligible sensations. Whence, then, is their value? It is derived from some mysterious power in the mind; a power wholly distinct from the ideas on which it operates, but which possesses in itself the principle of unity, and imparts that unity to the rest. All the facts of my life are thus held together, and make up one man—are reduced into personal identity, by my perceiving within myself that I, who lived twenty years back, and have passed through a multitude of changes, yet have continued the same man throughout. All the scattered phenomena of a

science, as of chemistry or botany, are thus thrown into unity and order by the unific power of the mind itself. It is as if a petrifying stream took up in its course twigs, and pebbles, and insects, and clay, and hardened them into one concrete. Or as the neo-Platonic philosophers delight to illustrate it, it is like a ray emanating from the sun, throwing itself out into infinite space, traversing infinite varieties of atmosphere, and yet never losing its unity, and continuing all along *one* stream of light. So, if we may trust opticians, light is itself a sea of fluid, spread out in infinite space, but lying in darkness, until some impulse from a central sun throws it into waves and undulations, and then the whole universe becomes clothed with glory. So human society is a chaos of rude and worthless individuals, until some one mighty spirit has diffused its own wisdom and energy through the mass, and it becomes a nation. So families are held together by the life-blood of their original parent. So the whole universe of things is supported by the breath of its Creator. And so the Church of Christ, sick, and impotent, and unclean, as it is in itself, is made whole, and strong, and holy, by the presence of Christ within it. Every where there is body and soul; but the body is sanctified by the soul—the body many, the soul one—the body evil, the soul good—the body palpable to sense, the soul invisible—the body obedient, the soul ruling—the body earthly, the soul divine, and made divine by the presence in it of God. The evil is merged in the good, and the eye does not see it. The dark spot is swallowed up in the diffusion of light. The past is forgotten in the present. The sin of one part is covered by the virtue of another part. One sense is defective, but there is a higher to supply its place. Once establish an union between men—shew that they are

brothers, or children, or fellow-subjects, or friends, or even companions, and the merits of one instantly extend to all the rest. Thus a loyal father obtains the pardon of his rebellious children. The kindness of to-day covers the neglect of yesterday. A worthless family are honoured for the memory of their ancestors. A whole city is saved from ruin because one of its inhabitants is in favour with its conquerors. No fact is more common. But in all cases *the union must be shewn.* It is only as united in one and the same whole, that one part of a body can thus preserve the other—that this transfusion of merit and goodness can thus take place. The vessels to be filled with oil were brought into the widow's house, "and the doors were shut upon them." The poor woman *touched* the hem of Christ's garment before she was healed. And man's soul must be united to Christ, before, in the sight of God, its sinfulness is lost in the purity of Christ. For justification is no legal fiction—no mere change of moral feeling in the Creator, without any corresponding change in the creature; for once suppose that moral feelings can thus vary independently of their object, so as to call good evil, and evil good, and where is the immutability of God's nature, and the foundation of all our morality? But by the sacrament of baptism our body is taken into the body of Christ; we are made "members of Christ," and by this union are admitted to all the goodness, and power, the favour of God, and the hopes of immortality which are concentrated in the person of our Lord. In the same manner, it is said in the Epistles, that by baptism we are "crucified with Christ," "buried in Christ," "raised with him," "quickened with him," "made to sit with him in heavenly places." We are united to his body, and thus are made partakers of its whole nature.

By the same fact is to be interpreted the language of the Church respecting the "death unto sin," which is typified by immersion in the water. We share in the victory achieved by Christ over the enemy of our souls. To us that enemy is already dead, and will continue dead so long as we maintain our union with Christ. Lose that, neglect the means which he has appointed for continuing it by the sacrament of the Lord's Supper—let our faith or adherence to him wax cold—and this privilege we lose; and the power of sin revives. And upon this is founded a practical rule of Ethics of the greatest importance. When that evil nature within us, which is not extirpated, but only left dead at baptism, and capable of revival, begins to stir within us again, it is natural that our attention should be drawn to it, and that we should prepare ourselves for a struggle against it. We are placed, as I said before, over a mortally wounded enemy, and all our efforts are to be directed to prevent him from recovering himself. And it is hard to see and feel that the proper mode of doing this is to think not of him, but of another. But it is not we who destroyed, and can still subdue, the Evil One, but another Being, in whom only we have any power. Our business is not so much to commence a battle with the devil, but to adhere steadfastly to our Saviour, who will fight the battle for us.

There is a man drowning in the water. You long to save him. You join hands with others, and form a line; and the farthest person will then be able to reach him. This farthest person will do it all. But the poor drowner struggles violently. You are impatient to save him, break hands, the chain is dissolved, the power gone, and the man perishes. They are pulling you up from the bottom of a well. You are frightened lest you fall, make an effort to

clamber up yourself, let go the rope, and are lost. You are in a boat in a storm, and know nothing of its management; the sailor bids you do nothing but hold the helm steadily in one position, and he will take care of the rest. A huge wave is coming, you try to steer the boat from it, the wave bursts in, and the boat goes to the bottom.

Remember, in one word, that you yourself can do nothing. It is not you who have destroyed the evil power, nor can prevent it from reviving: it is Christ. Your business and struggle must be to retain your communion with Him, and He will do all for you. And therefore, when temptation comes, and the imagination is leading you astray, and evil pleasures are stirring in your body, do not think so much of evil thoughts and sinful desires — even of expelling and mortifying them — as of strengthening and multiplying the good. More frequent communion, more earnest prayer, more constant association with good men, and study of good books, is our greatest wisdom, when tempted to evil: thinking of the evil itself will only give it strength. When bad thoughts intrude, you may indeed attempt to repel them; but the only mode of repelling them is by substituting others in their place. They may retire for a time, at our bidding; but if we leave the house empty, they will find it an easy matter to return to it again. Fill it with good thoughts, and they cannot obtain an entrance. And the good thoughts which only will be able to resist them, are thoughts of Christ, an abiding sense of our union with Him, of our dependence on Him, of His entire perfection, of His power and will to do all things for us, while we can do nothing for ourselves. If all the blessings of Baptism are ensured to us by its uniting us to Him, and if our sense of this union with Him is but another word for faith, and when

faith vanishes, the union vanishes also, — it is evident that any acts, or thoughts, or struggles, which do not tend to preserve this faith and this union, will be valueless. One man will endeavour to escape from an evil thought by engaging in study—another by plunging into society—another by some apparently innocent amusement—another by indulging his taste in the creation of beauty; and all these seem good to us, compared with the evil from which we are flying: they serve as a temporary refuge. But let us ask our own hearts, if they are more than temporary. They bring us no nearer to the real end of our journey. The waves are gathering round us, and no escape is offered but in one vessel. We seat ourselves in another, and do not discover, till too late, that it is too weak to bear us.

And, further, it may be observed, that as sin comes to us with a variety of temptations, the Christian faith has also a variety of resisting facts, each for each; and to control our imagination aright, we must have them sorted as it were, and adapted to the several cases of temptation. Much of our ethical education depends on this right distribution; and our minds should be so practised in it, that every bad thought which occurs, should, by a natural association, draw up immediately its corresponding antagonist of good. Study St. Paul's Epistles, and observe how admirably this is contrived — how the two armies, as it were, of thoughts, are brought out in battle-array, and each matched severally against each. When servants would disobey their masters, they are reminded that they themselves are servants of Christ; harsh masters are told, that they have a Master in heaven; husbands, that the marriage-union is a type of Christ's union with the Church; the unclean, that their bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit; deceivers of their brethren, that they are

members of each other; men who make divisions, that the Church is one body; if given to vain questions, that there is one sound doctrine; if unmerciful, that they have been forgiven for Christ's sake; if presumptuous, that they are justified in Christ, and not of themselves; if despairing, that Christ is within them; if minding earthly things, that they have their conversation, or polity, in heaven. A careful reader would do well to study this arrangement of antitheses; and they will supply him with the best and only mode of keeping good thoughts ready at hand to come into his mind and take their stand against the ingress of those that are evil—true against false—Christian against worldly—spiritual against fleshly.

CHAPTER XX.

SUCH, then, is the new position in which the Church places man by the rite of Baptism. It begins where all heathen education ended; it realises what philosophy only imagined and desired; and commences a new creation of moral beings (καινὴ κτίσις, in the words of St. Paul), just as the moving of the Spirit of God upon the waters of chaos called forth a new earth into light. And a system of professedly Christian education, which does not constantly bear in mind this distinction, and frame itself upon the privileges of baptism, as on its fundamental fact, can only end in confusion and mischief. What should we say to a moralist, who should lay down the same rules of liberality for a man who was poor and labouring for his bread, and for one whose wealth was acquired? When a man is struggling in the water, we advise him to stretch out his arms and swim; but we do not persevere in the advice after he has reached the shore. When he is struggling with his enemy, his movements are of one kind; but they must be very materially altered when the enemy lies prostrate on the ground. And it is because all modern systems of ethics, whether treated as a science, or practically applied in education, have neglected this difference, that the science has fallen into its present degraded state, and education itself has become a farce.

What, then, you will say, is every thing completed in Baptism? Has man no future struggle to make? May he repose, contentedly and securely, on what the Church has here done for him? Un-

doubtedly, in many cases. "It is certain, by God's Word, that children which are baptised, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved."[1] But all men do not die as children: they live for many years after their baptism. And though by baptism they have passed from the outer world into the porch, and even within the gates of the sanctuary of God, there is a power still around them which struggles to pull them back, and to pluck them out. It is against these attempts that the Christian has to fight.

And here we enter on the great problem, not only of Christianity, but of nature, — man's free agency, and his position in a covenant with God. For Baptism is a covenant. The Church in England no longer registers the vow with the same solemn forms which the ancient Church once used — bringing men together before Baptism, and commanding them, by the voice of their bishop, to make their public renunciation of the devil, and their promise of obedience to Christ, with acts and gestures which could not be mistaken, — "turning from the west to the east," "stretching out their hands," repeating promises, which they were warned at the time were registered in heaven, and would be produced against them at the day of judgment; even subscribing their names to the written declaration, and sealing it with their seals. All this has been set aside: but still the form of words has been retained; and adults for themselves, and children by their sponsors, are required to vow and promise voluntarily, that "they renounce the devil and all his works;" that "they believe all the articles of the Christian faith;" that they desire "to be baptised in this faith;" and that "they will obediently

[1] Rubric in the Baptismal Service.

keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of their life." The form has been changed: the truth continues the same. And upon their perseverance in this promise, and on this only, the privileges of Baptism are permanently secured to them.

Now, are we quite aware of the real difficulty and mystery contained in this fact of a *covenant* between God and man? With the words we are very familiar; but the whole depth of their meaning very few seem to discern. Perhaps there is nothing more thoroughly incomprehensible to the human understanding — nothing which it is compelled to receive more indisputably as a fact, without the power of reconciling it with its own fundamental conceptions. For a covenant implies, in the first place, two independent agents. Where one exerts an absolute control over the other, there can be no covenant. But how can a creature be conceived to be independent of his Creator? His faculties—his affections—the whole of his internal nature, and the whole of the external circumstances which conspire to mould him—the mode in which he will be acted on by them—the result they will produce, —must, according to our conceptions, be arranged and foreseen by the Creator. He must be subject in every act to laws; for without laws to regulate the movements both of himself and of other things with which he is connected, we cannot conceive any thing to exist at all. Even chance is but another name for an unknown law. No effect can take place without a cause: that which determines the effect is law; and that law must be attributed to the Creator.

But a covenant implies another fact still more wonderful. These two independent agents in it must also be mutually dependent. "If you do this,

I will do that," is the language on both sides. Each party professes to guide his own conduct by the movements of the other; to place himself at his mercy, to constitute the other his master. Now, that the Creator of man, the Almighty God, should do this to one of his own weak and sinful creatures, is a problem which all philosophy may be defied to explain. It is no less than erecting man into an independent deity, in some sense superior to his Maker, and governing the actions of his Maker—placing at his disposal the counsels and the works of God himself. Thus Adam brought death into the world: thus the whole wonderful dispensation of the Gospel, including all that Christ did, and, more than this, all that he suffered, with all the plans for the redemption of the world, stretching, as they have, through ages,—all were the work of one poor creature. The actions of God himself were made dependent upon the acts of a man. This single tremendous fact is in itself sufficient to fix our eyes upon the earth as the scene of some wonderful dispensation. It may be, that all the hierarchy of heaven are so formed, so surrounded by influences of good, so secured against deviation from the will of God, that they move, as a mighty machine, unconditionally, undoubtingly, and unerringly—every thought the reflection of truth, every feeling aspiring to God, every action the impulse of his will. In one portion only, the portion which fell, there may have been room to fall. But of this it is presumption to speak. But the relation of man to God, even in man's corruptible and fallen state, is far higher. It is the relation of two mighty potentates, capable of making a treaty, and binding each other by mutual conditions. The language is very awful; but it does not go beyond the truth. If I have the power of thwarting the designs of God, of marring

his creation, of disobeying his laws, I am, so far, an independent sovereign, and a sovereign of vast power, for it is a power reaching to the will of God himself.

Now, why Almighty God should have placed man in this wonderful position to himself, if we looked to our own moral nature, it might not be hard to understand. For we also (give us the whole scope of omnipotence, yet), as solitary beings, without other beings to love us, serve us, honour us, and whom we might love, and bless, and honour, should find even heaven a hell; and such beings could not satisfy the real wants of our affections unless they were independent of ourselves. Were they the mere passive creatures of our own will, loving only because we commanded them, moving only under impulse from ourselves, their love would be worthless.

"Not free, what proof could they have given
Of true allegiance, constant faith, or love,
Where only what they needs must do appear'd,
Not what they would? What praise could they receive,
What pleasure I, from such obedience paid,
When will and reason (reason also is choice),
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
Made passive both, had served necessity,
Not me?" *Paradise Lost*, b. iii.

And there may be, in the deep mystery of the Divine nature, facts corresponding with such an analogy. No where is it described as solitary. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.... When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; ...when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was

by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him" (Prov. viii. 22).

But to argue from human nature to the nature of God, even in that moral nature, on the identity of which so much depends, may lead us perhaps, as it led Milton, to something like profane speculation. It is never safe to inquire why God acts, as he does act. The fact is enough for us.

But the mode in which he acts we may presume to study: and it may throw no little light, both on the perplexed question of man's free will, so important in the science of Ethics, and (what is still better) on our practical duties connected with it. What, then, is the machinery, if we may so speak, employed in the creation of man's independent agency? For this world is such a machinery: it is, to repeat an illustration, a manufactory of free moral agents; and the process is perplexed and difficult to follow.

It is not, then, as most philosophers assume, by endowing man at his birth with what they call freedom, or spontaneity, by removing from him all restraints, laws, and obligations; as if a planet were created in space, and thrown free, under no law and no control, to wander through the heavens. Without impulse impressed from without, and bias implanted in its form, and law to regulate its relations to other bodies, neither the planet nor the mind could move at all. It could not even exist; for it could have no character or attributes. Freedom, therefore, in this sense, is an absurdity. But man is created wholly under law and external influence—if you will, wholly a slave. He comes into the world with a mind receiving impressions, moving, desiring, feeling, all according to laws impressed on it by its Creator. He has a body attached to him, which

he did not make himself; that body again formed to act by laws, and subject to external influences, all pre-arranged and determined. His whole intercourse with the world without, and with his fellow-beings, is resolvable into natural laws, which he cannot alter. He is imbedded, as it were, and incorporated in the vast machine of the universe; and all his movements are decided by the Hand which framed it and himself.

In this state man is wholly a machine; and we may dispense at once with all the discussions of materialists and sceptics, which turn on this question, and allow their assertions to be true. It is waste of time and argument to debate the point. And if this were all, then indeed the consequences might follow, which bad men are so anxious to draw from it. Man might be no longer a responsible being; and virtue and vice would become a name. But against this mechanical force, binding down the natural man, God has been pleased to array another counteracting force—the force of threats and promises, warnings and advice, punishments and rewards, which appeal to man's knowledge and his reason; and which even the natural man acknowledges to be obligatory. And man is *made responsible, not by being set free from any restraint, but by being placed between two counteracting restraints.* Here is the world and the flesh dragging him down to sin; there is the voice of God, speaking through parents, ministers, experience, remorse, and calling on him to follow goodness. He is thrown by nature into one path, which nothing could save him from following blindly and mechanically, if no second power was exerted to throw him into another. When is the needle free to attach itself to the loadstone, if ever it can be called free? Put one loadstone by it, and it falls at once. Place

another on the opposite side, and it vibrates tremulously between them, and then it is free. And thus God, in making man's nature the slave of pleasure, has yet so arranged both pleasure and pain—mixing in the cup of vice pleasure at the brim and pain in the dregs, and in the cup of virtue pain in the brim and pleasure in the dregs; and has made the pain of vice so infinitely greater than the pain of virtue, and the pleasures of vice so infinitely less; and has provided teachers and advisers all around us, set before us examples, beset us with influences of good as well as influences of evil—that there is no human being who can do wrong, without being self-condemned—condemned by that very voice within him, which makes him the slave of pleasure; still more, as he rises above the mere animal nature, condemned by that love of higher enjoyment, intellectual as well as moral, which developes itself in the pursuit of truth, in the indulgence of natural affections, or in the gratification of the fancy. No man can be acting under the influence of his mechanical nature, without being brought to confess that it would be wiser and better for him to have obeyed the commands of God. The very fact of its being a mechanical power which drags him on, condemns him for following it; for his whole desire is freedom, and power, and escape from such subjection. And his self-condemnation is in proportion to the weakness of the temptation to which he has succumbed, and the strength and vividness of opposing warnings which have been placed against him. Sin is then the greatest when we sin against light. And so clear to the slighest reflection is the superiority of goodness over vice, that nothing can obliterate it. The consciousness of our folly; our sense of weakness; our consequent shame in the presence of other moral beings; our conviction that they must regard

us with the same contempt with which we regard ourselves, and an expectation, as a necessary consequence, that they will wish to remove us from their presence, dealing with us as odious things, as we ourselves would deal with all things that are hateful and contemptible—all are riveted as links in a chain. Were the whole universe of moral beings, and God himself, to pronounce that we were not despicable, guilty, and punishable for following evil instead of good, it would be impotent against the voice of our own hearts. Conscience would still remain; and self-reproach be as keen as ever. You cannot destroy it by any arguments about mechanism and matter, because you cannot destroy the real relation between good and evil.

And now observe how all the dealings of God with man have been carried on upon this principle of placing him between two opposing temptations, and trying if he would exercise the only freedom intelligible or possible—that of doing the good which his reason approved, when evil was still powerfully attracting him. Can he resist temptation, and follow good? If he can, he possesses—not indeed freedom, for in following good he follows the impulse of his reason; his will is decided by calculation; his affections move to an object; he binds himself down to an external influence, just as much as before. He cannot, as a reasoning being—as a being at all—be *free*, in the sense of not being subject to an external influence. But he has that which is the real element of moral greatness, the real thing for which men pursue what they call freedom, the real object of the love and admiration of moral beings, and which constitutes independence and personality—he has *power*, *energy*, *force*—a fact which cannot be tested until he is seen to act in opposition to some mighty influence, to which Nature has sub-

jected him. And when he does resist pleasure, and deny himself, and tear himself away from present and overpowering influences, by an internal summoning up of strength and reason, he does act in opposition to the whole laws of his mechanical nature. It is as if a boat, when hurried down a torrent, suddenly stopped and shot upward. As if a stone, cast into the air, resolved to remain suspended in it. As if a star shot from its course, and struck out its own path in the heavens. And such an act, at once, and none other, will make him, in strict language, a free agent and a person.

And now, has man himself ever exerted such a power? Did he in the garden of Eden, even when death on one side was balanced against eating an apple on the other? Did he in the covenant with the Jews, where, to counteract the evil tendency of his nature, there was brought forward the whole array of external influences which man can imagine. Experience of past suffering in Egypt, the sight of miracles, the wandering in the wilderness, the presence of God, His voice, the mountain blazing with fire, the promises, and still more the curses of the law, exhausting the whole range of the human fancy—the special immediate providences—the family, the state, and the priesthood, all framed into a bulwark against disobedience—the multitude of positive laws, reminding him at every step that he was placed under an awful discipline—the solemn duties imposed on him, the presence of heathenism in its worst enormities, the voice of prophecy, the hopes of a Messiah—every thing which a divine wisdom could invent to surround man with temptations to obedience, as he is surrounded by nature with temptations to disobedience—all were tried, and they all failed. It is not indeed possible to imagine how such spontaneous power could be generated in the human heart,

by any contrivances of the kind. We may defy human reason to conceive the formation of internal independent action in the mind of man by any merely external influences. You cannot hatch a stone into life. You cannot make a plank grow, though you plant it, and water it, and dig round it hour after hour. There is no germ of life within. It is not in nature. But even were it conceivable, practically we have had no experience of it. After such a trial as the Jews, we may well deny its possibility as a matter of fact. You cannot imagine an external influence which was not exhausted upon them, and with what effect their history informs us.

And yet, you will say, were no men good before the coming of our Lord? Grant that the mass both of Jews and of heathens were corrupt, and unchanged by the external influences of virtue created for them by God, both in his natural and Mosaic dispensation, was no individual raised by them to true holiness and power? If in only one mind such a power was generated, your position is overturned, that such a phenomenon is impossible. And again, no man during his whole life has been the slave of evil, but must have had intervals of good. During these intervals, has he not exerted this spontaneous power? Take the case of Abraham, of David, of Socrates, of the many other men recorded in history, whose lives might be a pattern and a shame to Christians. I answer, that the question before us is not, whether they acted virtuously, were just, brave, temperate, pure, or wise; but whether their virtue emanated wholly from an internal self-acting spring within them, without which, in the eye of one who could trace all the interior workings of their nature, they were as much the creatures of circumstances when doing good as when doing evil. And it is, I think, to circumstances created and combined by

a merciful Providence, forming them with good constitutions of body from good parents, placing them under good teachers, throwing them into situations which either shocked them into virtue by the sight of vice, or preserved them in purity by the absence of temptation;—it is, I think, to such external influences that we must attribute, as Plato did, all the natural goodness of man before the Christian era. The real internal power was still wanting. And the fact would be proved, if we were able to shew, as probably no one will require to see proved, that not one of these persons, however consistent in general, passed through life without some evil, without being in some point or another subject to sin, and conscious of his inability to escape from it. We have on this point the unanimous confession of the holiest and wisest men of antiquity. And one defect of power in any one point is quite sufficient to prove that, notwithstanding the general conformity of their actions to a right standard, they were still under the command of evil, and incapable of extricating themselves by any exertions of their own. Evil never attacks the whole man. It seizes some one part, and by its working there, we are to judge of its comparative power. Take a child, case him in armour, make the armour impenetrable to any weapon, and then set his enemy upon him. All the enemy's blows are wasted, and the child is safe; but no more by his own force, than if he continued safe because no one happened to attack him. And some men Almighty God has been pleased thus to case in armour, and keep them pure in the midst of sin. But let the battle be between two armed men. Which is the stronger? Which is the master of the other? One has secured himself at all points. Every blow is thrown off; every blot is covered. The other is guarded all over, but in one little spot,

at one single moment; and in that spot, and at that moment, he is laid prostrate. If man does not possess the power of resisting temptation *whenever it occurs, and in whatever shape*—if he succumbs to it in one single act knowingly and passively, be assured that in all others where he does not succumb, he is propped up by external circumstances. For power is a thing absolute and perfect in itself, and admits of no degrees. Either I am in your power, or you are in mine. And when the combatants are battling, an eye which could see the whole of the contest in all its parts from the beginning to the end, and discerned the weak point long before it was touched, would yet pronounce at once which was the master, though the conflict for a time seemed dubious, and even occasional advantages were gained by the party to be vanquished. When a cat is playing with a mouse, you do not say that the mouse has power over the cat, because it is permitted to escape for a moment. A tree falls to the ground, but not owing to its own strength, but to the deficiency of strength in its supporters. And so all the acts of goodness done in the world by man, while man was left to himself, were, it would seem, the result of circumstances. The power of evil was lessened, or that of good increased; but the heart of man was still propelled by the force of temptation, by an impulse from without. In reality there was no resistance—no real power. It pursued virtue because it was agreeable, safe, elevated, noble, expedient, natural, politic, wise. The heart followed its own bent; and that bent, by a merciful Providence, happened to be on the right side—but it was nothing more.

And therefore the goodness of heathens is no proof that man by himself can triumph over external influences; and the words are true, that "the

condition of man is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God."[1]

And yet, without this power of turning himself, how can he attain the perfection of his nature, after which he is constantly sighing—the ἐνέργεια, which Aristotle requires as the first condition of mind; the denial of self, which Plato describes as the very essence of virtue; the regal sovereignty of the Stoics; the liberty and spontaneity, without which modern philosophers have assumed that there is neither goodness nor happiness? How, perhaps it might even be said, can we be to other moral beings—even to God himself—an object of love and affection, as an independent moral agent?

And yet again, one more difficulty: how, if this independent power be attained, is it to be reconciled with the absolute unity and supremacy of God, as the one sole fount of all power, from whom all creation flows, and without whom nothing can exist? This is, and always has been, the great problem of ethical philosophy; and human reason never has solved it, and never will.

And yet it has been solved by the Church. The Church comes to man, enslaved as he is to the outward influences of the natural man, and not only brings before him more facts, more knowledge, new relations, higher promises, more awful threats, and a more powerful body of advisers, to counteract them. This would indeed be much; and some men seem to imagine that it is all. And yet, if what was said before is true, even all this would be useless. It would be only an external power; and external power alone cannot change the heart. And therefore the Church gives more: it puts into the heart

[1] Articles of Religion, x.

a new principle, or rather a new being, or rather, if we may so dare to speak, God himself, by imparting to it the Holy Spirit, and uniting it to the Body of Christ. It is from this Holy Spirit, and this only, that all the real power and spontaneity of man proceeds. It acts as the individual himself, because it is united to himself. It is given secretly and imperceptibly; so that in an action he cannot discriminate what comes from heaven, and what from himself, except from the consciousness of the fact that he is resisting evil. He does make this resistance, he suffers pain voluntarily, he feels the whole force of the attraction of evil, and yet remains firm against it; and discovers no power but his own which is thus acting; and yet he knows that it is not his own.

"I can do all things," says St. Paul, in the full consciousness of his individual personality. And yet he says again, "Not I, but Christ that is in me." It is, after all, God, and God alone, who works within us, "to will and to do of his good pleasure." Every act of power is thus referred to him: and the man who is doing good, traces up every element out of which his goodness is formed to the hand of the one supreme Author of all good. The laws by which his mind works—the external circumstances of the material world in which he is placed—the constitution of his body—the conditions of his birth, family, education, profession, association with other men, all of them co-operating to produce one general end—more especially his admission into the Church—the free gift of the Holy Spirit, the subsequent opportunities of keeping it alive within him—and all the other aids of Christian doctrine and practice,—all come from God. And thus is solved the problem—how to create an agent possessed of the consciousness of individual independence, and yet to reconcile that independence with the absolute uni-

versal sovereignty of the supreme Creator. Man is placed here upon earth apart from the direct presence of God, before which, from the constitution of his nature, it might be wholly impossible for him to sin by disobedience: the influence would seem to be overpowering, leaving no opening for free agency. He is subjected to external influences, which his own heart condemns, and against which he is warned by all the solemn admonitions of his moral teachers, and the Church, and by the punishments of Nature —but warned only; no power is exerted over him, to drag him back against his will. And thus, in following evil, he feels that he is acting of himself —he makes a choice—he resists good—he becomes an ἀρχὴ πράξεως, an originating agent; and this he never could become, were he placed only before one road, and tied down to it by influences of good only, as a steam-carriage is propelled upon a rail-road; for no sense of power can be generated without something to resist, and without a sense of power there can be no consciousness of independent personality. And then, while this evil power, if power it may be called, continues still in action, secretly and silently another power is insinuated into his heart, which raises him up to resist in a contrary direction, to fight against evil, to overcome it; while still he has the choice of submitting to it. And this power being God himself, the omnipotence, and predestinating will, and entire supremacy of God, is reconciled with the consciousness of free agency in man. Looking forward, man feels that he is free: looking back, that he has entirely been moulded by the hands of God. Here again there are two doctrines, the one seemingly incompatible with the other. Human reason will acknowledge one, and exclude the other. And yet both have found their advocates, and both are incontestably asserted by facts.

Catholic Christianity holds them both. It warns, encourages, blames, praises, punishes, and rewards Christians as free: it declares to them, at the same time, that they are wholly the creatures of God, that they can do nothing without him. It commands men to hold both these truths; and though they cannot be held in the mind at one and the same moment, to think of one at one time, and the other at another—of their free agency when they are about to act, of their predestination when they have acted. All indolence, weakness, carelessness, and despair, is to be checked by the consciousness of our individual responsibility, and sense of the power within us, given to us by the presence of Christ. All presumption and self-gratulation is to be crushed by the acknowledgment of Him as the one sole author of our goodness. And as at no moment, while life remains, can we be without a field of action, without something to do, and some opportunity of doing right, the Church absolutely forbids us ever to think of predestination when we are looking back upon our sins. "The Lord," we know, "hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil" (Prov. xvi. 4). But it is not for us to dwell on this, when we are conscious of being wicked: our duty is to escape, to act, to think of the future more than of the past. We have no business with the thought of predestination *then*, as we have no business with the thought of free agency when we are looking back upon our goodness. Regulate and distribute the thoughts, each under their proper occasion, and all will be right. So God is all love; and yet he is all justice. Merge either love in justice, or justice in love—as human reason is prone to do—and what becomes of our religion and our virtue? Hold them both, and yet misapply them; speak of God's love to the hardened sinner, and of

his justice to the trembling penitent,—and you confirm the recklessness of the one, and stifle the reformation of the other. Adjust them rightly, and you may save them both. And so with the mysterious union of man's free agency and God's predestination. Do not attempt to reconcile them, that is, to merge one in the other; but hold them both, and only be careful how you apply them. Follow, in one word, the Church, as she has declared her doctrine in a form, which sound moralists must always regard as combining the profoundest philosophy with a precise, discriminating, moderate, and practical prudence, and as affording a most admirable specimen of the true ethical spirit of the Catholic Church.

Let us conform to the *seventeenth article*. No philosophy ever surpassed it in its conformity to facts. No education can be good which does not follow its practical advice, which is the same that I have here endeavoured to put forth. I will go further, and say, that an education which endeavours to slur over this problem as one full of danger, (which it is), and does not positively and boldly take its stand on a definite declaration of the truth, will be pregnant with mischief. Has man any individual personality, or is he a mere machine? This question must be answered both by the teacher and the pupil, before it is possible to decide on the system by which he is to be governed and moulded. In the present day, alarmed at the extravagances of Calvinism, perplexed still more by the embarrassments of a rationalistic controversy on such a mysterious subject, in which rationalism must always be lost, because its very principle is to retain only one doctrine, when experience declares that there are two,—men have endeavoured to evade the question. They have almost prohibited its discussion; and yet they cannot prohibit themselves from pronouncing

upon it. And if you examine their schemes of education, you will find that they all do pronounce on it, though covertly, and almost unknown to themselves. They frame a scheme of education, which treats man as a machine; as if by external influences you might turn and bend him as you like: and, at the same time, they lay that education before him, acknowledging his right to judge of it, choose it, or abandon it, as he likes, as being a free, independent agent. They recognise—they cannot help recognising—both the facts; but they leave out all mention of Almighty God. Their education-committee is to do, what the Church declares that God alone can do, in forming and moulding man. And man's independent will is appealed to as a source of power and seat of wisdom—not that Spirit of God imparted to him through the sacraments, and working imperceptibly in his heart, without which the Church declares that his free agency is a delusion, and he himself, with all his seeming resistance to good, a mere slave in the hands of evil. I assert, that the theorists of modern education have their seventeenth article as well as the Church—that Aristotle has one also—that Plato has one likewise—that it appears and re-appears in every scheme of philosophy which concerns itself with the nature of man—and will appear till the end of the world. And even if the teacher could set it aside from his own view, he cannot cover it up from the eyes of the pupil. I would appeal to every reader, young as well as old, if he has not at some time of his life plunged into this speculation. He cannot escape it. It is working in young minds around us to an extent of which few are aware, but those who have had a long practical experience in the details of education. It rises up in the human heart with the first consciousness of sin, and the first hopes of hea-

ven; and if the teacher does not stand by, and aid the struggle, and place the truth forward boldly and definitely, as the Church proclaims it, and couple it with the warnings as to its application which the Church lays down, the consequences are often fatal. Presumption or despair is the necessary result: and let us take warning in time.

CHAPTER XXI.

MAN, then, in the rite of Baptism is treated as an independent agent—just as he is treated both by his fellow-creatures in their ordinary intercourse with him, and by God in the system of nature. All our intercourse with society is a scheme of compromises, mutual concessions, reciprocal action, in which two separate parties are recognised, and though separate, still connected. And, I might add, that this holds good, notwithstanding the fact that one is formed out of the other. That the child is created by the father, no way supersedes his subsequent independence. The soap-bubbles are blown from the mouth, but they detach themselves, and fly away each in its own orbit; and the voice which would recall them must deal with them as no longer fastened to their matrix. Even the very physical world places itself in a covenant with him. It respects him as one having originating powers; consents to become his servant, if he submit to certain conditions; and if those conditions are neglected, it destroys him. The water says, I will suffocate you, if you venture into me rashly; but I will carry you on my surface, minister to your thirst, feed the well-spring of your life, if you will adhere to my laws. The fire is ready to burst out and devour him like stubble, and make the face of his abode a desolation; but it is tame and innocent as the breath of air, and performs for him the most menial offices, when he respects its terms. The rock will crush him to atoms, or imprison him in an inextricable dungeon, if he

neglects the law of gravitation; but by the very same law it will shelter him, defend him, throw itself into shapes of beauty, and strew itself under his feet, that he may fly along the surface of the earth—if man does what?

This question I now propose to answer.

What are the conditions which these external powers of the world, all delegated and commissioned by God, and representing the will of God, impose upon man for his observance, as the price of those innumerable blessings which they impart to him? Nature, mankind, the Church, all agree in their stipulations; and upon these stipulations it is clear that his duties are founded. His very existence depends on them; much more his happiness and goodness.

I answer, then, that the first condition imperatively required of him in entering into relation with all these contracting parties is, *that he learn a creed.* They all recognise him as a being having intellect, and in whom intellect is the essential and ruling principle, on which all the other parts of his nature depend. So Aristotle declares, that the individual personality of each man lies in his νοῦς, or thinking principle—νοῦς γὰρ ἕκαστος. And so Plato places the same intellect at the head of his whole constitution, as a monarch over counsellors and subjects. And so our own great moralist, Bishop Butler, makes the reason by which we distinguish between good and evil the supreme authority in man.

None of them, indeed, in thus asserting the supremacy of the intellect, dreamed of confounding, as modern rationalists confound, the power by which we receive in our minds fundamental truth, and that by which we trace the connexion between these and subordinate truths. "There is one faculty," says Aristotle,[1] "by which man comprehends and em-

[1] Nicomach. Ethics, lib. vi.

bodies in his belief first principles which cannot be proved, which he must receive from some authority; there is another by which, when a new fact is laid before him, he can shew that it is in conformity with some principle possessed before. One process resembles the collection of materials for building—the other, their orderly arrangement. One is intuition —the other, logic. One, *νοῦς*—the other, *ἐπιστήμη*." Or, to use a modern distinction, one is *reason* in its highest sense—the other, *understanding*.

Now the *logical* faculty in man, by which he proves and demonstrates problems, does not in any sense occupy the paramount place in his nature. But the real reason, or faculty with which he embraces truth, is indeed his distinguishing mark, his essence. And it is this which is contemplated by God both in nature and revelation, when, in the covenant which he vouchsafes to make with man, the intellect is first addressed. Without this being in right order, the whole nature of man is considered worthless, and only fit to be destroyed.

The bad sophistical schools of the present day, with all their faults, are not so much in the wrong, when they make ignorance the great evil, and knowledge the great good of man. Their folly consists only in not knowing what constitutes ignorance and knowledge, nor how they are produced. "Know me," says the Power which stands over man; whether the power of the elements of matter, or the laws of creation, or his parent, or his teacher, or his fellow-man—"Know me and my nature, comprehend my attributes, measure my strength, realise my presence, become familiar with my movements, and then I will be your slave, and you shall be my master." What is all physical philosophy, chemistry, zoology, medicine, astronomy, but the knowledge of a power which we are able to command, when we

have investigated its nature? What is government founded on, but on the knowledge of the nature of man, and the circumstances of nations? What is every act of a reasoning being, but the embodying in some external form a belief, or truth, or intellectual conception? Knowledge is the skeleton, on which all the muscles, and nerves, and flesh of our being are hung and framed; or rather the heart, from which every pulse of life beats and circulates. What is action, or art, or feeling, without science or knowledge as its basis? And what is knowledge but a creed? And therefore, when the Church insists that the first thing required of persons to be baptised should be the reception and belief of a creed, she only acts on a principle, which every human being in his senses hourly acts on likewise —which he cannot dispute without overturning his own existence.

And this creed is a summary of facts relating to the nature and operations of the great Being with whom he is placed in covenant—just as the creed of the physician contains the history of the healing and destructive power of the animal world; and as the creed of the chemist developes the workings of that chemical power, by which the combinations of elementary substances are regulated.

It is also partial. It does not tell all that might be told, but leaves much in mystery; making him who studies it conscious that there is much behind to be still discovered. And where is the creed of any science, which does not lead the eye into depths yet unexplored in the distance?

It is divisible into two parts,—one relating to the mysterious sanctuary of God's nature, into which no eye ever yet penetrated, and which we can learn only by his own declaration; the other to facts which have taken place under the eye of man him-

self. That a Being in the form of man died and rose again from the dead, is a fact of experience—that that great Being is himself divine, is not a fact of experience: it is told us by God. And there is the same division in the creeds of science. There are articles in them which we take upon trust, because we find them implanted in us by nature, and read them there as in the handwriting of God. That the laws of nature are permanent—that similar causes produce similar effects—that nothing can happen without a cause—that no power can generate a power greater than itself—that contradictories cannot be true;—these are abstract truths, which to attempt to prove would argue madness, but without which the science of nature must fall to the ground. We believe them on the authority of our Maker, speaking through the immutable instincts of our mind. And the other articles of the creed of man are collections from human experience. They are facts, which, without experience, man could not have prophesied: as, that the strata of the earth lie in such an order; that the atoms of matter combine together in such and such proportions; that animal bodies are framed upon such and such a type.

And these latter articles of experience in the creed of Christianity as well as of natural science, we receive alike on the testimony of men. Men whom we have no reason to doubt, have with their senses witnessed such and such facts. Not one merely, but many have made the experiment. They have declared them not as fancies of their own, not as deductions of reason, but as things which "they have heard and seen." And when philosophers persist in refusing credence to the system of Newton, until they have verified individually all Newton's observations, or will receive no primary facts by tradition which they have not experienced themselves, then Chris-

tians may think it irrational to admit the facts of Christianity on the testimony of the Church. They, indeed, who would doubt these latter facts, and yet would teach the world some physical creed of their own, might also ask themselves, if, like Christianity, they have an organised society perpetuated through eighteen centuries for the very purpose of transmitting them unaltered—whether the founders of their theory sacrificed their lives in attestation of it—whether it has stood the test of the practical experience of millions since first it was published—whether it has been probed and sounded by the most searching scepticism that ever was arrayed against a doctrine—whether it is confined entirely to simple facts of observation, in which men's senses are not likely to be deceived, or is mixed up with some human deductions and fancies—whether, lastly, the experiments which they record have ever been submitted to the eye-witness of five thousand men at once, repeated again and again in the face of determined enemies, and acknowledged as facts even by them? And, let it be remembered, such a question would become not only those who may dispute the miraculous origin of Christianity, but those also who would overlook its transmission of a definite creed. It has been said before, but in these days cannot be repeated too often, that the transmission of such a creed is just as much a matter of historical evidence, attested by the senses of men, as the miracles of our Lord.

Neither is it useless to observe, that chemistry and philology, and all other human sciences, begin with teaching children their several creeds, as the very basis of their education, just as the Church puts her own creed into the mouth of the person to be baptised, even though it be an infant. Both parties recognise alike, that *without a fixed foundation of truth all education is useless.* Neither of them ask,

if the party to be educated *understands* what he is thus taught. Both know that he cannot *understand* it; for to understand implies that he possesses some previous principle already, under which he reduces his new acquisition. And as yet his mind is unawakened. Yet both know also that he has within him a power of apprehension, by which he can fix these truths in his memory, incorporate them in a belief, act upon them, realise them, test them by subsequent experience, without at present perceiving their consistency. *He can believe without understanding.* Shew me the man who has reduced into a perfect intelligible system, resting upon some one principle, from which all the rest flow, every action of his life, and every conclusion and principle of his knowledge; and then we may be called on to prove that understanding a principle is necessary to believing it.

But man's life, we know, is full of inconsistencies, and his knowledge at the best is a mass of undigested, unreconciled facts and principles, the greater part of which he has never attempted to reduce into harmony with each other, and therefore to understand; and upon which, nevertheless, he acts with as much confidence as if he saw through them all. You may as well say that a child cannot learn by heart an unintelligible jargon of words, or do as he is bid, without comprehending the object of the command, as that he cannot believe without understanding. On the contrary, the credulity of man is insatiable. It grasps any thing and every thing. It is as capacious as the mind itself, which is a whole universe in miniature. The slightest touch removes all its difficulties.

> "SEB. A living drollery! Now I will believe
> That there are unicorns; that in Arabia
> There is one tree, the phœnix' throne; one phœnix
> At this hour reigning there.

ANT. I'll believe both;
And what does else want credit, come to me,
And I'll be sworn 'tis true. Travellers ne'er did lie,
Though fools at home condemn them."

Tempest, act iii. sc. 3.

Think only of that prodigious leap which the mind takes on its very first experience, which it repeats every hour, without which it could make no advance whatever into knowledge—the act of generalisation. The child is burnt by the fire to-day—and yet on that one experience it believes immediately that fire will burn him ever after—that it has burnt and will burn every one from the beginning to the end of the world—that every thing resembling fire will possess the same property. I say that such an act of credulity surpasses any which could be laid to the charge of the merest idiot. And yet it is universal. It is compelled by Nature—it is sanctioned and confirmed by experience. It is the foundation of all knowledge—the conclusion of all inquiry; and all that reason has to do, is to see, not that our generalisation is correct, for of this we never doubt (no man doubts that precisely the same cause, under precisely the same circumstances, will always produce precisely the same effect), but that we have not, owing to the imperfection of our senses, or the carelessness of our survey, mistaken the cause, left out some element in the fact, or included one which is not essential to it.

And both the philosopher and the Church know also that the whole process of man's acquisition of knowledge is not the collecting it from scattered facts, but the tracing it in facts. Men do not pick up knowledge, as in the Eastern tale the woman ate her rice, atom by atom. He receives it in solid morsels. He has the general laws given him, and afterwards he applies them to practice. And there-

fore, without learning a creed at the very beginning of a study, the study cannot be carried on.

They both know also, that to convey this creed to the mind of the ignorant student, one condition is required,—without which, the attempt is as inconceivable as to pour water into one vessel without previously having it in another, and establishing some communication between them. Neither philosophy nor the Church dream of putting knowledge before the young, in the shape of books, without men to assist and explain them. They do not establish printing-presses, and call them schools. They have books, indeed, but they put them into the hands of men, whom the young can love, and fear, and desire to imitate, and cling to with the affection of the heart, as to superior beings; whom they wonder at, and reverence; whose life is a mystery to them; whose smile delights; whose frown appals them; who stand to them in the place of God, until the eye can be purged to see beyond them the real divinity which is in them. They attach the mind of the student, young or old, to the mind of his teacher; and then, by this feeling of faith, as by an electric conductor, the whole stream of knowledge passes from one mind to the other.

They know also, that when this faith is wanting, no power on earth can compel the mind to imbibe knowledge. You may strive to bury the seed in the hard and frozen soil, but it will never take root. You may force the tongue to repeat words, but it will be always with a secret sneer; and when a sneer is on the lips, never can truth be in the heart. And faith they both assign to one and the same source—the gift of God. Both declare that it cannot be created by any human reasoning. Let a chemist take a child, arrange before him his gases and his metals, and proceed to deduce from experi-

ments the general laws of chemistry. He wishes to prove that fluid arsenic is an antiseptic. Let him perform experiment upon experiment, day after day, and hour after hour, and unless one previous condition exist in the mind of the child, he will be as far at the end of years from conveying to the mind of that child a belief of the general law, that fluid arsenic is *always* antiseptic, as he was at the beginning. *No accumulation of experiments whatever can bring a general law home to the mind of man;* because, if we rest upon experiments, our conclusions can never logically pass beyond the bounds of our premises; we can never infer more than we have proved; and all the past, which we have not seen, and the future, which we cannot see, is still left open, in which new experiences may arise to overturn the present theory. And yet the child will believe at once *upon a single experiment.* Why? Because a hand divine has implanted in him the tendency to generalise thus rapidly. Because he does it by an instinct, of which he can give no account, except that he is so formed by his Maker.

It is God who has given him this faith. And so of Christianity. All the miracles in the Bible might be again, as they once before were, wrought before men, without leading them to the conclusion that He who wrought them was commissioned from God, unless another principle of natural faith were implanted by the Holy Spirit. Evidences will not make a Christian. They may affect *the understanding*, convince the logical faculty, by shewing that Christianity presents nothing discordant with facts, or inconsistent with itself. But this is not the reason, the λόγος, by which we recognise the Church and our Lord as our Teacher and Master. "You say what I cannot disprove, but I cannot assent to it," is a common profession to hear. And the assent of the mind to

truth is, in all cases, the work not of the understanding, but of the reason. Men are not convinced by syllogisms; but when they believe a principle, or wish to believe, then syllogisms are brought in to prove it. When man has accepted Christianity, then he may illustrate it by evidences. And the reason of man in all cases—the power, that is, by which, instinctively, intuitively, without knowing why, or engaging in argument, he grasps the first principles of knowledge, and the undemonstrable truths, from which all other truths are educed,—this power is divine. It is the reason of God his Maker working in the heart of man. And hence the Christian Fathers uniformly assigned the knowledge of truth, possessed by the Greek philosophers, just as much as the faith of Christians, to the same source, if not to the same kind of inspiration. It was the λόγος, or Word, or reason of God. They agreed, so far, with a deep Christian philosophy of more modern days, that man sees all things in God.

Once more: the philosophy of the intellect and the Church agree perfectly in insisting that the learner should receive into his mind, without the slightest omission or alteration, the whole body of first facts and principles put before him, on the authority of his teacher. They are both rigidly precise in guarding against the minutest alteration in their fundamental doctrines. Geometry, for instance, begins with definitions. Will it permit the student to alter them even in the least point? or must they be learned precisely as they are given? Chemistry is the science of certain changes which take place in the combination of matter; and those changes depend on certain substances mixing together in certain proportions. Will those proportions admit of being carelessly slurred over, or changed? Grammar is the science of the inflexions, which

words are made to take in order to express corresponding varieties of ideas. Will a Greek scholar permit the substitution of an *o* for an *a*, or the omission of an accent, or the alteration of a breathing? And so, will the Church tolerate that any portion whatever of her revealed creed should be left out or modified by her student in theology? Does she feel the value of iotas? Much, indeed, beyond the pale of positive revelation, she leaves to the inquiry of the student; as, also, much which is not contained in the rules of syntax, or in the grammar of chemistry, is open to future speculation. Something also she permits *apparently* to be added—*apparently, not really;* she allows a proper authority, when emergencies arise, to put together several revealed truths, and deduce from them, not a new doctrine, but a new expression of the old doctrines; just as the doctrine of the Trinity is a formal development of doctrines contained in the Church from the beginning,—and as the thirty-nine articles are larger than the creeds, and contain inferences and deductions from the creeds and Scriptures, as well as the creeds and Scriptures themselves. And so a great portion of modern philosophy is a new combination of old materials, received from the original authors—a combination wrought by each successive age for purposes of its own—placed perhaps on more dubious ground, resting for authority on the original sources, open to suspicion as being the work of inferior minds, whose logical powers might have deceived them—and yet, at the same time, extremely valuable as an antidote to principles which would corrupt the original truth. For instance: "There are," says Xenophon, in his *Memorabilia*, speaking of the existing schools of philosophy, "two sects; the former describe the whole universe as *one*. They are, in fact, Pantheists. The latter describe it as

many. They are Polytheists." Here were two systems of belief; and there was authority for both. For the whole universe, we know, must have proceeded from *one* Creator; it must be held together by *one* pervading spirit; it must form *one* system. But, again, we see that it is composed of parts. There are in it various, to us, independent agents. Every living being seems to have a power within it of originating spontaneous motion. It is full of divisions. There are in it counteracting principles—decay as well as growth, evil as well as good. Therefore the universe is *many*. And this also is true. Both facts formed part of an original creed of philosophy received from its first founders. But when, instead of holding them both, the restless logic of the Greeks began to infer from the unity of the world that there was no plurality in it, or from the plurality in it that there was no unity, then Plato stepped in and framed from the two separate doctrines a new formula, not different from them, but newly stated, and containing them both—namely, that the universe possessed *both unity and plurality* together, was *one in many, and many in one*. And this doctrine of philosophy, exactly analogous to the Trinitarian doctrine of the Church in the mode of its expansion, he has stated at great length in one of his most important dialogues, the *Parmenides*, and made it the foundation of his whole philosophy, practical, moral, and political, as well as metaphysical. In the same manner, all the conclusions of mathematics are deductions from distinct principles established separately in the axioms and definitions. And every action of man is a deduction from the data of many separate sciences: as, his taking a walk for exercise is founded on certain laws of gravitation belonging to the physical philosopher, on laws of health laid down by the physician, on laws

of prudence derived from the moralist. He combines them, and draws the inference. And without this power of drawing inferences, the separate knowledge will be useless. Only he, like the Christian Church, must take care that no conclusion is drawn which is not contained in the premises. He must not add to his original creed, in the mere attempt to make a new arrangement of it.

Once more: the Christian Church recognising, as all sound philosophy must do, the distinction between man's reason and his understanding—between the faculty by which he imbibes truth from others, and the faculty by which he discerns its internal consistency with itself,—recognises also the order in which they necessarily come. It promises, that if the student believes first, subsequently he shall be able to understand. If he receives what he is taught, then he will be able to apply it to practice, and to discover its correctness and agreement with facts. But "if ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established" (Isa. vii. 9). It does not exclude the understanding, but places it in its proper subordination.

So far, then, there is little difference or none between that part of heathen Ethics which regards the intellectual principle in man, and the analogous part of Christian doctrine.

But two points still remain, which in the present day require to be carefully noticed.

In the first place, there is in this day little, comparatively speaking, of that gross infidelity, which rejected the whole creed of Christianity as a delusion. Most men affect to believe in the historical facts contained in it, such as the miracles of its propagation, and the resurrection of our Lord. They have no objection to a creed containing these being taught to the young. But they do object to

what they term the metaphysical subtleties and definitions respecting the divine nature. All these they would exclude from religious education, as unnecessary, and even mischievous. Facts—not what they term abstractions—are to be all that is offered to the reason. Now Aristotle himself made this distinction between the subject with which the reason, or, in his language, the νοῦς, of man is conversant. Some are facts cognisant by the senses; others, general laws and abstract truths. But Aristotle declares that both are necessary to man, and so does the Church. And so, also, would every art and science, if they thoroughly understood their own processes.

I assert that metaphysical abstractions are in all cases the first things conveyed to the child, and which must be conveyed to him before he can be instructed in any facts—that in teaching even the most menial art, requiring only a succession of servile actions, as digging the ground, or hewing a plank, without metaphysical axioms at the basis, no art can be inculcated; just as it is wholly impossible to teach what are called the facts of Christianity, without also inculcating what are termed, and falsely termed, the *speculative* doctrines of the Church. The theory is the root of the practice. The facts are the evolution of the doctrine. Is there any art whatever which is not founded on a science, either real or supposed? The farmer is a chemist, the watchmaker a mechanician, the sailor an astronomer, the tax-gatherer a political economist, the poet a philosopher, the miner a geologist, the gardener a botanist. Without a science as the basis of all these practical operations, they are mere quackery, and cannot answer. You may hide general rules, and wrap up the abstract laws on which they are founded in the particular rules; but even then you teach the

laws, though not in a distinct form; for they cannot be excluded from the facts by which they are exemplified. And why do you not take the trouble to state them distinctly? Because you would deal with the mind which you are teaching, as with a dull and obtuse intellect, incapable of comprehending them. The moment you discover a higher understanding, you proceed to lay before him the science, as well as the art. You insist on his learning it. What are schools of design for our manufacturers, of geometry for our sailors, of chemistry for our farmers, but recognitions of the propriety of teaching abstract truths wherever there is a mind capable of receiving them? Now the Church treats all its children with equal respect. It believes them all equally capable of imbibing and appreciating the higher truths of religion, as well as its mere facts—equally capable, not by their own natural powers, but because all are equally endowed by baptism with that Spirit of truth and wisdom, without which no divine knowledge can be attained. It tells the Christian child doctrines which it was the highest aim of the heathen philosopher to reach with all the efforts of his mind. Aristotle and Plato knew no higher objects of thought than the very questions contained in the purely doctrinal articles of the Christian creed,—such as the nature of the supreme God. Instead of setting them aside, as vain and idle speculations, they deemed them absolutely necessary to the happiness and perfection of man. And as for supposing that you could teach the duties of religion, or the history of God's dealings, without also teaching the abstract character of his attributes, they would as soon have dreamed of teaching a man morals by telling him how to act in such particular circumstances, without giving him any thing of the general distinction between right

and wrong. Therefore the abstract doctrinal truths of the creed are as much an essential part of the knowledge required in religion as its mere facts.

I omit here the consideration (the true consideration, indeed, by which the question must be decided by any rational being), that both alike are revealed by God, and imposed on us by his ministers; and man is not to believe, or distinguish, or prefer, or exclude, any part in a whole which comes from Him. I omit also, that God himself has shewn an especial preference for the high doctrinal truths of revelation. The unity of the divine nature is the first commandment in the law. The acknowledgment of our Lord as the Son of God is the rock on which Christ himself declared that he would build his Church.

To this it might be added, but that it is difficult to explain clearly without a long metaphysical statement, that the perception of the most common facts depends upon the awakening in the mind of certain very high abstract conceptions, above and beyond all the truths of any particular science; and which Aristotle recognises in his *Rhetoric* under the name of commonplaces, τόποι, or common forms, under which all sciences are reducible. What is possible and impossible, greater and less, past and future, the notions of space and time, the general ideas of relations,—all these, which are in fact the very highest subjects of metaphysics, must be called up in every mind, however incapable it may be of expressing them, before it can form the slightest judgment, or carry on any reasoning. They may sound abstract and mysterious in language, but in fact they exist in every mind as the very first elements of thought. They are not derived from experience, though awakened by it; but are implanted by another hand—are the result of intuition. And

they bear a close analogy to those high abstract doctrines of theology, which the Christian student learns as the foundation of all his religion. What are we to say to a scheme of education framed expressly upon the principle of omitting them—which would profess to make men Christians, teaching them the duties of Christians, without specifying the nature of the Being to whom those duties are directed—and the acts of that Being, without the attributes from which they emanated? And yet such is the plan contemplated by the new system of national education, and accepted by the nineteenth century as the most valued and wise discovery of modern enlightenment.

CHAPTER XXII.

But besides those who would exclude from education what they term the metaphysical doctrines of the creeds, there are others who would exclude all creeds and catechisms together, as having no connexion with the intellectual formation of man. "I do not ask my physician," they say, "if he be a Romanist or a Presbyterian. I can study zoology without examining the thirty-nine articles. A Mahometan may be as good a botanist, even as good a politician, as a Christian. Why make a religious creed the basis of all your instruction, and refuse to instruct any who will not engage to conform to it?" This is the great question debated in the present day. Now the Church, in requiring from all who are baptised their belief in a certain religious creed, does certainly recognise a very opposite principle. She asserts, at the very least, that man cannot discharge the engagement into which he then enters with God, without knowing the nature of God; and that consequently a creed is necessary for all those actions, which he is to perform as a part of his engagement. If he is to serve God, please him, honour him, praise him, thank him, contribute to his glory, fulfil his will, and bring others into obedience to him, he must first know what God is. And here is at once the answer to the question. He who believes that *all* the operations of man, of his intellect as well as of his heart, are parts of his duty to his Maker—that none are excepted—that when he is studying mathematics, or teaching grammar, or

manufacturing cotton, or excavating mines, or inventing steam-engines, still these are the acts of a reasoning being, and must be guided by a will, and directed to an end, and be pregnant with moral influences of good or of evil, and therefore that he is responsible for them as much as for actions more obviously moral,—he who believes this will never think of asking why the learning of a creed is necessary to the student of grammar—why the depths of physical, or of any science, cannot be safely entered, without we carry in our hands the safety-lamp of religious doctrine. But the fact is, that men in the present day know nothing of the nature of the human intellect. They have materialised it with Locke, dissected it with the Scotch writers, converted it into a machine with a still worse school, until they have completely bewildered both themselves and others; and by one common confession, the science of the education of the intellect, which is all that I am at present considering, is become what the science of human nature would become, if none but the anatomist, with a piece of a muscle in one hand, and the fragment of a rib in another, were permitted to give an account of it.

Two capital blunders they have committed; and until another generation has rectified them, nothing can be done to improve our present wretched system of instruction.

First, they have completely forgotten that the working of the human intellect depends on two distinct things; one, a system of mechanical laws, by which associated ideas come into the mind, pass through it, combine together, and throw out conclusions and impressions, just as a steam printing-press tosses out the sheets as they are printed;—the other, a power entirely distinct from this machinery; one which stands by, puts it in motion, stops it,

watches it, takes up the papers it throws out, examines, rejects, or approves them, and without which the whole machine will either come to a stand-still, or explode in the air. Let us remember that at least once in every twenty-four hours this machine of our intellect, for six or seven hours together, either stands still or goes mad. Have the goodness to close your eyes, throw yourself back in your chair, and probably in a few minutes, I—this little book—shall drop from your hands, and you will become a lunatic. You will have visions floating before you, which have no more reality than the spectres which haunt the monomaniac, but which you will believe to be real as firmly as he believes in his own. You will talk, but your words will be a mass of incoherences. You will reason, but every law of logic will be violated in your syllogisms; and yet you will believe them all. The dead will rise up before you—animals will talk—trees fly—space and time be annihilated—you yourself turn into a stone, or a whale, or a heathen god, or a Roman philosopher, and you will not be surprised at it. You will cry without any thing to cry for; delight in that which, when you are awake, will make you shudder; commit the most horrible crimes without fear or shame;—in one word, be a madman. The whole earth, every night about twelve o'clock, becomes a vast lunatic asylum—with one providential precaution, that the same power which lets loose our minds, ties down our feet and hands. If you ask how this takes place, I answer, that it is by the mechanism of the intellect—that very mechanism to which modern philosophy (shame on the day which permits such an abuse of such a word!) would reduce it wholly. There is a train of past associations, moving on, and linked into each other by innumerable unseen filaments; and there are animal movements also going

on at the same time in the heart, the lungs, and especially the stomach, and producing impressions on the internal nerves, and they convey them to the brain. And from the collisions, crossings, and combinations of these two trains, under no other guidance upon the railroad of human consciousness, there arises that terrible crash and confusion which we call madness and dreaming.

And now, is it necessary to add, that the intellect is not merely mechanism, but that some other power is requisite, and in man's lucid intervals exists in him to control it? And what is the nature of this power? It is, remember, not intellectual merely, but moral; not merely a second intellectual machine put on to rectify the aberrations of the former, as Mr. Babbage inserts in his calculating engine another engine to proclaim its faults. But it is a hearty, earnest, patient, self-subduing, hopeful, affectionate, honest, rejoicing spirit, which has a moral end in view, and judges the movements of the intellectual machine by the qualities of good and evil, as well as by true and false; and distrusts it, fears it, loves it, bears with it, stops it, or sets it going, according to a law of God written in the heart; and endures, manfully and heroically, the pain of watching it; and denies itself sleep and rest, and the pleasure of anticipating results, and the luxury of success, and the triumph of fame, rather than allow one error. Without this, the intellect of man is indeed a machine. In the day-time, indeed, it may work with fewer explosions and less blunders than in the dark when we sleep; because then, the senses being open, there comes in another train of impressions, *uniform and permanent*, from the objects which meet the eye, and these materially control and steady, and sometimes almost entirely overpower the movements of the other trains; so that men,

though really at the mercy of these mechanical and external impulses, manage to pass through life without any very formidable collisions; as madmen may be kept in check, and even be allowed to mix with society, *under the eye of a keeper*. But without the moral principle, the very highest productions of the human intellect—poetry, mathematical calculations, theories of philosophy, inventions of art — are just as much the result of circumstances, mechanical, destitute of merit, even in their best forms, or as much the work of chance, as a piece of cotton which comes out of a mill. You have no security whatever for the machine working well. Change of place may remove the fly-wheel; change of temperature disturb the nervous action of the body; casualties string together the association of ideas in this or that series; accident again bring the three to bear upon each other in one way or another,—but the result is the work of chance; meaning by chance that coincidence of the general laws of Providence into which man cannot penetrate, and which deprives him of all power of foresight and moral government in his actions.

And this moral power, I say, is precisely the same as that, which is the spring of actions more peculiarly called moral. That which gives man real spontaneity, real energy, real faith, love to God, zeal in his service — which takes him out of the slavery of the body and its lusts — this same power also enables him to superintend and regulate the movements of his intellect. The working with the intellect is as much an action as the working with the hands, or the tongue, or the feet: it is as much under the control of the will, as much the subject of moral responsibility. All alike, to be good, must be placed under the control of a moral principle, or what Bishop Butler calls "the principle of virtue." All

alike, without this, are bad, or at least are worthless. And the Church gives us this power, this principle of virtue, for our head as well as for our heart — to "govern our thoughts as well as our deeds" — in Baptism, by implanting in us the gift of the Holy Spirit; and with this gift it couples necessarily the knowledge of God. It is an essential part of it. And the knowledge of God, or the creed of religion, is as much essential to the regulation of man's intellectual processes in every branch as it is to the performance of his moral duties.

And how it is essential, we shall see presently.

But there is also another reason why a creed relating to the nature of God is a necessary element in the education of the intellect: it comprehends a class of facts intimately connected with every other branch of facts belonging to every other separate science. It is the trunk, indeed, from which these others ramify. Theology is the root and mother of all knowledge. Once before we have observed, that the ignorance of the present age in this country looks upon the several departments of science as perfectly distinct — as if they each sprung from a root of their own. The evil tendencies of the day have heaped up a mass of rubbish round the parent stem, and every bough is thought to be a tree. It was not so of old. Let us endeavour to clear away the rubbish, and lay bare the truth. And, remember, this is no new doctrine; it is the old declaration of the Catholic Church; it is the fundamental maxim still retained in her great schools of education. And it is asserted just as expressly by the profoundest of merely human philosophers — by Plato himself.

Let us remember, then, the point to be proved. We have seen that the work of education must commence in the intellect of man, and in that faculty of

his intellect by which he embraces and becomes possessed of fundamental indemonstrable truths. And the Church recognises this fact, and begins by giving him a theological creed. And this theological creed is, I say, essential to his proper attainment of all other knowledge; first, as I have shewn already, because this attainment must require a moral active principle within him, which, as I shall shew presently, cannot be secured without a knowledge of God as he is; and, secondly, as I now propose to shew, because the facts themselves of theology are inseparably connected with those of all other sciences.

The sciences, then, are divided, according to their subjects, into two grand classes,—those which relate to matter, and those which relate to mind. Botany, geometry, mathematics, astronomy, zoology, belong to the former; morals, politics, poetry, with all the fine arts appealing to the imagination, political economy so far as it relates to the impulses of human avarice and wants, jurisprudence, philology, and theology, belong to the latter, because the ultimate fundamental facts in them are all facts of mind, not of matter. Now, in each of these departments, Nature has thrown before the eye of man a vast seeming chaos of separate facts. All the variety of the animal world before the zoologist—the infinite multitude of plants before the botanist—the confused stratification of rocks, with their innumerable fossils, before the geologist—all the workings of human nature, like a tangled many-coloured web, before the moralist—history, with its facts and phenomena, thrown together, yet apart, like particles of sand on the sea-shore, to be sorted and connected by the politician. Now, what is the work of the intellect when placed before these unarranged atoms of facts? It is, to do that which the Spirit of God

did for the chaos of matter, and which the same Spirit in the Word of God, the λόγος, does for the wild, turbulent, distracted chaos of human ideas and passions — reduce them into order. To do this, it must discover among them, what Nature has undoubtedly placed in them, though at first not exposed to view, the general laws by which they are produced, the general forms into which they are cast. Confused as they seem, they are in reality arranged upon a plan — there was an end to be answered by their position. Nothing created or permitted by an almighty and all-wise Being can be without its design. A man unskilled in music listens to some great composer; he hears nothing but a rude succession of discordant sounds. But the master-hand had arranged these sounds designedly; he had an object in view, some idea to realise. To do this, he threw them into a certain form; and when we have learned his object, and understood the mode in which he purposed to effect it, we shall understand his music. A geologist travels over England. He sees chalk and gravel, clay and granite, limestone and coal formations, huddled as it were together. He examines them, discovers that they occur in groups, in one regular uniform order; in other words, traces out the *form* or figure of their arrangements; and geology becomes a science. So, to the ignorant boy, language is a chaos of words. The scholar discerns the *forms* of it, the laws by which it is inflected, the rules to be observed in the arrangement of letters and syllables, words and sentences; and grammar becomes a science. It is, to use the language of Plato, the whole business of man's intellect to discover the forms or ἰδέαι, or, as we usually say, the general laws of things.

And remember, that the whole value of knowledge lies in these *forms*. What is history, as a bare

register of chronicles, without philosophy to explain them? What are chemical facts, without chemical laws? What the use of separate words, without the rules of grammar? What are the limbs of the body, omitting the order in which they are arranged? What is the knowledge of the numbers, "one, two, three, four," without a knowledge of the laws which regulate their combination and relation to each other? that twice two make four; one and two three; two taken from three, leave one; and the like. What is the use of having a medicine, and seeing a sick man, unless we know the law by which the medicine will affect the man?

The same truth may be stated in another shape. Every form or figure implies at least two lines, and a space between them. Every law also implies at least three things,—one body to act, another to be acted on, and the change which takes place in consequence. It is a general law that heat melts ice, and cold hardens water. Here is the heat, *one;* the ice, *two;* and the liquefaction, or form into which the ice is thrown by the action of the heat, *three.* The cold, one; the water, two; and the hard form which the water assumes, three. Arsenic, one; a living body, two; and the death which takes place on their union, three. Now, to state this general law, is only to declare a certain relation which exists between two bodies under certain circumstances. And thus the business of the human intellect will be to discover the real relations of things. Or, again, it may be described as the discovery of the causes of things, and their effects. These different expressions mean one and the same process; and wisdom has usually been defined under one or other of these descriptions—as the knowledge of forms, by Plato; or of causes, by Aristotle; or of relations, by Clarke; or of general laws, by Bacon. But all motion im-

plies an impelling power, all change a cause; and the human understanding traces up power beyond power, cause above cause, till the chain terminates at last, as it must terminate, in one great Power, the Cause and Lord of all things. All things, then, whatever, must have proceeded from God.

And now think, what is the relation which, both from our own mind we should anticipate, and from experience we find to exist, between a creation and its Creator. Is it probable that there will be any resemblance between them; any such resemblance, as that the knowledge of the one shall be a key to the cipher of the other? Yes, answers human philosophy, and especially modern science; for, by the knowledge of the creature, you may ascend to a knowledge of the Creator. Study the world around you, and it will teach you the nature of God. You may read his will, and wisdom, and attributes—what he likes, what he dislikes—in all around you. The whole world is a vast temple covered with divine hieroglyphics. It is to its Maker, what the body is to the soul, a visible form revealing an invisible spirit. So the spirit of man develops itself in a creation of matter. It is a centre unseen, untouched, beyond all depth of sense; of which we know nothing, but that it is the source and well-spring of life, and thought, and action. And when it first begins to act, it gathers round itself, upon a model of its own, an embryo of matter; and from thence spreads into an organised frame, and assumes shape after shape, as its external circumstances require, till it comes forth into light; and then it expands into a full-formed human frame, and gathers round it still a larger orb of matter, which also it fashions and bends to its own will—its dress, house, property, servants, dependents, and all that vast circle of human beings, small or great, which hang

round every individual, as the atoms hang round the centre of gravitation—and still its creative power proceeds onwards, embodying itself in children, who carry on the primitive type of their parent, and become fresh centres to fresh concentric circles; and in works of art, which transmit the same impression through successive generations; and in language, which enables him to project the image of his mind beyond the range of the eye; and in written words, which carry it beyond the range of the ear, and triumph over the obstacle of space; and then in printed symbols, by which he multiplies the copies to infinity, and preserves them against the destruction of time; and then he conquers the differences of race, and forms a common language, as Greek was formed for Christianity, and Latin was maintained by popery; and thus the soul of man realises the work of creation, and expands from a single point into a vast sphere and atmosphere of power. And *every part of this is an expansion and copy of itself.* In every stage it is the inner man magnified, and developed, and made visible. And so, with reverence be it spoken, we may and must conceive, (and God himself has no where otherwise declared it,) that "the invisible things of God are manifested by the things that are made" (Romans i. 20); that even where he has permitted evil to intrude and deface his work, we may read his long-suffering, his mercy, his love of a reasonable and free-will service, and of a creature perfected by suffering, rather than of an indolent and mechanical subjection to an external influence.

It is not Pantheism to say that all things come from God, and bear the type and stamp of his nature. In this sense Christianity is Pantheism; and Pantheism is true. But Pantheism refuses to acknowledge the separate existence of evil, as a permitted

antagonist to God in this present world—and here it is false.

And, now, can you trace the connexion between an abstract and, if you please, a metaphysical doctrine respecting the Divine Being, and the general laws of Nature which human science professes to investigate? Are they probably like to each other? May not the laws be only repetitions and varied expressions of one grand primary truth, as every leaf is only a new exemplification of the general type of the whole tree? And, therefore, may not this primary truth be a key, and the easiest key, to the general laws? May it not be easier to learn nature from theology, than theology from nature—to descend rather than to ascend—to make, as we have so often before remarked—to make our study of truth rather the deduction of received principles to particular facts, than the induction of the principles from the facts?

Think, in the first place, if, with all our study of Nature, all our boasted attempts to erect a natural theology, we have been able to make any progress. Compare the full creed of the Church, which we know to be true, with the meagre, mutilated, inconsistent Deism, extracted from human philosophy. Scarcely the foundations of the building are laid; and the moment a hand attempts to raise any higher superstructure, it tumbles down. Compare the arts of the present age, and of the age in which theology was recognised as the "Queen and Mother of the Sciences." This is no place to enter into such a vast inquiry; but take our painting, our architecture, our sculpture, even our mechanical powers, our chemical discoveries, our agriculture, our political theories—contrast them with those of a religious age, and you must confess that, with all our boasted improvement, we are what the Greeks were

declared by the Egyptians to be, "mere children." Whatever discoveries have been made in that machinery which is our chief boast, have been made by common workmen, by accident. It is a notorious fact. Scarcely any thing has been done in the present day for the real advance of science by speculative men.

And then revert to a remark made before. Recall the real process of discovery—that it is made by a general principle, or theory, suggesting itself to the mind of the observer as a theory, and then the observer proceeds to examine facts, in order to confirm or refute it. Without the theory previously existing as a problem, the "interrogation of Nature by experiment" is as useless, as it is to receive answers when we put no questions, or to put questions when we have no doubts. And all the greatest discoveries of speculative men have been made by their first taking some theory, of a very high and general nature, closely connected with the nature of Almighty God. Newton, for instance, was impressed with the deep belief in the unity of the Divine Being; hence in the uniformity of his works—hence in the conformity of the laws of motion wherever motion was seen—and thus his discovery was made. The same line of thought would suggest the undulatory theory of light; the whole theory of vegetable bodies as analogical to those of animals; the identity of electricity and lightning; the application of steam to navigation; the discovery of the New World. The very principle of analogy, from which, perhaps, all these primary suggestions proceed, is based on the theological doctrine of the one will and one reason of one Creating Spirit, carrying on all the operations of the world under one, or similar laws. Take away this doctrine, and all the inferences deduced from it by the anticipations of the philosopher fall

to the ground; and with them all the inquiries, and all the discoveries to which the inquiries have led. As a matter of fact, then, even physical science is based upon a principle of theology. Neither can it proceed a step without another form of the same principle; for when its laws are once observed, it still remains to guarantee their continuance. And how can this be done, without assuming that the Author of Nature is "without variableness or the shadow of turning;" that he will still uphold the system which he has made, and not delude the expectations of his creatures?

Even these considerations might suggest a doubt as to the correctness of the prevailing separation between a revealed theology and natural science, between the Athanasian creed and the discoveries of our human philosophy, even in the world of matter. And if even here, how much more in the spiritual world—in all that proceeds from that mind of man, which we know to have been made in the image of God, and to be an emanation from his own breath of life!

It would be a large inquiry to illustrate this generally by instances; but a few may awaken curiosity. And in tracing how even the great mysteries of the Gospel may assist in such an inferior work as the prosecution of human science, let us not be charged with irreverence. Even the material world is holy and noble, as the work of God. The light of the dimmest taper is kindled originally at the sun.

And I take the physical sciences chiefly, because if the position is true here, it must be true every where.

It was, then, the doctrine of the unity of the Divine Being which led to the truest ancient astronomy; suggesting the belief that the heavenly bodies were formed into one regular system, were them-

selves globular, and revolved in circular orbits; for in this form only could men discern in space and matter a type of unity and infinity. And if, besides this doctrine of the unity of the Author of good, they had known any thing of an author of evil being permitted to disturb the universe at present, and yet of his final subjugation,—"He shall bruise thy heel, and thou shalt bruise his head,"—it might not have been left for modern astronomers to discover that the mechanism of the heavens was full of disturbing influences—that none of its movements were perfectly regular—and yet that those disturbing forces were so balanced as to preserve the whole system in safety.

It was the same doctrine of the unity, exclusive of all plurality, and of the purely spiritual nature of God, unconnected, as Christianity connects it, with the doctrine of the Incarnation, which, in the East, crushed all science whatever; leading men to look on the changes of the physical world as mere illusive phenomena, without reality, and on matter as the unmixed seat of evil, from which man was bound wholly to detach himself.

It was the want of a knowledge of some infinite good Being, in whose eternity and omnipotence man's mind and heart might find a refuge from the miseries and distractions of the world, which compelled the highest Greek philosophy to throw all its energies into purely metaphysical speculations, leaving the natural world unexplored, as being incapable of supplying any certainty and truth. And the *regular, industrious* study of Nature in all its branches will be found generally accompanied with such a faith; just as a swarm of bees pursue each their own task steadily and quietly, so long as the queen is safe. Let her be lost, and all is restlessness and confusion until another is found.

Again, it is the boast of modern chemistry that they have discovered—what? That the atoms of bodies combine together in certain numerical proportions—say 2 to 4, 3 to 9, and the like—and on these proportions, or numbers, depend the whole qualities and action of chemical bodies. It is, they say, a discovery of experiment. But Pythagoras had declared it many centuries back. His theory, so long scoffed at as the very ideal of empty speculation, that the world was formed by "numbers," is only the modern theory, but deduced from a different source; not merely from a metaphysical analysis of ideas of relation, which, however, would easily bring him to the same truth, but from ancient traditions of a revelation, which invested numbers with a mysterious character, and traced up their various combinations to one primitive root—the number three, and that to a still prior root of unity, which, nevertheless, could not be conceived to exist without the other. "You cannot," says Plato, "have the idea of one thing, without the notion of three things also. The thing itself, another thing which is not it, and a third thing between them; for if there were nothing between, they would be one, not two. Neither can you see two things, and something between them, that is, see in the whole three things, without conceiving of them as one—for the third thing connects and binds together the two extremes." Upon this fundamental problem, Plato and Pythagoras built their theories. By the same mystery enunciated in revelation, the ancient Fathers used to interpret the innumerable passages in Scripture where numbers are introduced, in a mode which must strike the most superficial reader with surprise, and rouse him to discover some deeper meaning. And perhaps the book of Nature may be like the book of the Gospel, and contain a whole world of enigmas, only to be opened by this key. All the

"forms," the ἰδέας of things, thought Plato, are to be reduced into this one—are types and representations of a Trinity in Unity, and of an Unity in Trinity, and this one is the "form" of the supreme good, of God himself.

Again, is there no connexion between Socinianism and Materialism? Should we have had men by means of science endeavouring to convert human nature into a mass of bones, and flesh, and blood, and nothing else; perplexed with the inscrutable problem of the union of body and soul, and struggling to escape from it by turning soul into body, or body into soul; and astounding even their fellow-mortals by the grossness of their blunders,—if *they* had kept before them the one true type of man—may the words be used with reverence!—"Perfect God, and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting?"

Once more, before we leave the ground of these deep and inscrutable mysteries. It is a common lamentation of modern days, that nearly all the energy and thought of the middle ages was consumed in a barren and useless logic. The effect, indeed, of Aristotle's logic upon man is one of the most remarkable phenomena in his history. According to its modern objectors, it palsied all true activity of mind, blocked up the avenues to truth, threw a veil over the laws of Nature, and plunged the whole world in darkness. Much of this is undoubtedly true. But what has been the course of physical science, especially of botany, mineralogy, and zoology, since then? Undoubtedly many new facts have been evolved, and recorded. But the great work of science—that of reducing all the phenomena beneath us into one consistent uniform scheme—from this, without which the science is not a science, we are nearly as far as ever. Now, consider what has been the principle on which both

logic and modern physical science have hitherto rested. They are both systems of classification. They both pretend to arrange all the subjects within their sphere into orders, species, genera, subordinating them one to the other, throwing them into parallel columns, evolving, in fact, a tree with ramifying divisions, all springing from one trunk. And on what principle? Because they conceive that such is the real plan of Nature, which their scientific arrangement is bound to discover and follow. They assume the fact of there being such a plan in the original construction of the world, by which, from one primary type or genus, all the infinite varieties of subordinate classes are educed. Now in all their endeavours at classification upon this principle, it is well known they have failed. They have found it impossible to arrange animals, and vegetables, and minerals, under any such form, or ἰδέα. But the syllogistic logic is also a system founded entirely on the same principle of classification. And logic has also failed. No one can study it deeply without being embarrassed with difficulties and inconsistencies, without finding that it is in a great degree inapplicable to a vast proportion of the subjects of thought. May it be that this plan, so boldly assumed by human reason, delighting as it does in strict order, unity, and precision—that this is not the plan of Nature; that the infinite variety of objects around us are not evolved like the ramification of a tree, but formed, as a recent theory has just ventured to suggest, in what is called a circular arrangement—classes entering into classes, one within the other, vegetable, and animal, and mineral life, all distinct, yet all blended with each other, so that it is impossible to draw the line between them; the highest function of one species passing into the lowest of another; and the whole chain of being not drawn out into ramifying series,

but coiled up into a variety of circumvolutions, in which no one can say that the first does not enter into the second, nor the second into the third, nor the third into all. This is a new theory of natural history, which has been recently brought forward, with every probability of its being true; and with this must necessarily follow a modification of the process of syllogism.

But the maintainers of the old theories might have remembered that the form, or *ἰδέα*, which they conceived to exist in Nature, was the mere creature of their own fancy; that it did not correspond with the form, or *ἰδέα*, of the Divine Nature, as laid down by the Church. The very name of "circulation," adopted by the new theory, will recall to those who are familiar with theology, the name given to the true catholic doctrine of the Holy Trinity, when it became necessary to state it formally, in order to contradict the very same principle of classification and subordination, which a speculative, logical, materialising Arianism endeavoured to introduce. It was called the doctrine of circulation, *περιχώρησις*, *circumincessio*. And I know not how to state it more clearly than in the mysterious words of our Lord himself, when he says, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me" (John xiv. 10). And again, "I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." And again, "That they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one" (John xvii. 23). It is painful and difficult to bring down such solemn words to such an application. But all that God has framed is divine. And if all be a shadow and revelation of himself, even brute matter may bear on it an inscription recording the mysteries of his nature.

Let us be assured, if we would discover truth, we must read the lowest by the light of the highest;

not, as we now think, the highest by the lowest. All the prophecies, and types, and facts of the Mosaic dispensation were unintelligible to the Jews; they are unintelligible to us, until we throw on them the broad sunlight of the Gospel. Read the Epistles by the help of the Creeds, the Gospels by the Epistles, the Prophets by the Gospels, the Law by the Prophets, and all is clear. Begin with the book of Genesis, and study upwards, and who has not been bewildered and lost?

And I will close these short illustrations on the aid which might be given to all human sciences by the doctrinal truths of Christianity, with some few other instances, which I am well aware will appear most strange, and fanciful, and farfetched; but which to those who believe, with Plato, that all forms of being whatever have their parent archetypal form in a region far above, and who are accustomed, with the Catholic Church, and with the wisest men of Christian antiquity, to read deep mysteries in little signs, will not be without their significance.

I believe, then, that a geologist, deeply impressed with the mystery of baptism—that mystery by which a "new creature," καινὴ κτίσις, is formed by means of "water and fire"—would never have fallen into the absurdities of accounting for the formation of the globe solely by water, or solely by fire. He would not have maintained either a Vulcanian or a Neptunian theory. He would have suspected, as most men now suspect, that the truth lay in the union of both. And in conceiving a typical connexion between the material earth and the spiritual Church, he would have been justified by the whole tenor of Scripture.

I believe that a spiritualised eye, seeing all the human race shut up in the person of our Lord, having before it always the figure in which it pleased

Almighty God to place him before us on the cross, might expect to find a similar figure—the figure of the cross—placed here and there all over the work of creation; as a religious spirit in better days than the present erected that cross on high, wherever a human foot might be arrested by it; and as the ancient Fathers detected it in the most hidden allusions of Scripture: Moses stretching out his hands to the Amalekites—his rod—the branch which he threw into the bitter waters—the wood of the ark—the tree of life. In every animal and material nature he would expect to discern the figure of a cross; and he would not be surprised to find that all mathematical figures were reducible to this element; or, as modern anatomists have suggested, that the whole animal world is framed upon this type—a central column with lateral processes. It is one of the grand speculations of zoological science.

Neither, I think, would a man who weighed carefully the mysterious title of the Word, or λόγος, given to our Lord, permit himself to dream of language being an invention of man, a dead set of arbitrary symbols, mere sound without a corresponding spirit. He would look on it with the deepest reverence. He would never have fallen into those philological absurdities, which, by a secret sympathy, have always accompanied a materialising atheistic philosophy.

Neither should we have been deluged with so many idle theories of creation out of unity—creation of the world out of atoms—of societies out of individuals—of language out of inarticulate sounds—of matter out of spirit, as in the Oriental philosophy—or of spirit out of matter, as in modern European schools; nor of arts and sciences out of insulated experiment, without antecedent revelation;—if men had deduced the law of creation from the facts of the creation of the Church and from the nature of the Creator,

and had remembered that that Creator is not merely one God, but "Three Persons in one substance."

So also it is a question of statistics, of infinite importance at this time, what proportion of the property of the country is necessary to maintain the poor, the clergy, and the temples of God. The table of the House of Commons is loaded every session with speculations and plans on this subject. Would it be fanciful to suppose that a *tenth* might probably be the amount? such a sum at the very least having been fixed and demanded by God himself. And may not all the fearful embarrassments arising from the irregular distribution of our wealth be attributable to this simple fact, that we have forgotten the doctrine of revelation on this subject, and not yet struck out a better from all our political economy?

The French Revolutionists felt that some proportion of rest was necessary for man. Ten is a convenient number, and they fixed one day in ten. They were compelled to return to a seventh, because human nature, it was found, could not labour for a longer time together.

You want a model to explain the organisation of the human body, or the theory of vegetation. In each we can only see a part; there are mysteries which evade inquiry; facts for which we can assign no reason. Have we not near us a body and a tree full formed, with all its organs more perfectly developed, written, as Plato would express it, in larger letters, and of which we know that both man's body and the tree are but the types and symbols? Should we have had so many empty speculations on the seat of life; so many attempts to ascertain the nature of the vital principle itself; so many false theories of generation and growth, of animal spirits, of the functions of the nerves, of their

connexion with the brain, of the use or uselessness of separate organs—if a perfect ecclesiastical polity, modelled "after the pattern seen on the mount," were traced out, with its unseen vital spirit animating every part—giving sight to the eyes, hearing to the ear, feeling to the senses; secreting and distributing its various spiritual gifts; "supplying every joint;" connecting every member by one common organ of feeling and of motion; imbibing hourly the materials from which its bulk is increased, and secretly carrying on the process by which the good is preserved and the bad rejected; multiplying itself not by atoms, but by slips and seeds containing a certain portion of the organisation of the parent stock; decaying, and ultimately dying, and yet even then destined to become a tabernacle and abode of spirit?

All this, I am well aware, will sound fanciful and mystical. Fanciful it is, if it has no foundation in reality. Mystical it must be, if it be true. But he who cannot trace one grand and deep system of analogy running through the whole of creation from the top to the bottom, is wholly incapable of comprehending it. He is unfit to look upon it. Until once more we are taught to read the book of the world in this way, it will remain to us a sealed volume. I am only contending for that process of taking known and universal principles to suggest explanations of things unknown, for which Newton is so much praised in astronomy—Goëthe in his theory of colours and of the metamorphosis of plants—Harvey in the circulation of the blood—Niebuhr in his elucidation of ancient history—every great man in every great addition which he has made to the capital of human knowledge. But I do contend that the facts, placed in our hands by God himself, declaring his own attributes, the principles of his acting, the laws by which he has acted

in the most momentous of all his works,—that these are more likely to supply us with a key to the mysteries of his creation than any invented by man—that theology is vitally connected with every branch of human knowledge; confessedly with the sciences of spirit—I add, likewise with the sciences of matter.

CHAPTER XXIII.

It is easy, as Bishop Butler has observed before, to foresee the scorn, with which suggestions like the foregoing must be received in a day like the present, when men have so generally lost sight of that deep philosophy, which binds all things in the universe together by one pervading coherence, tracing little things in great, and great things in little, and reducing them all under high universal truths, without the possession of which the human intellect, actively aroused, cannot be satisfied. But without recurring to this view of the value of a metaphysical creed relating to the Divine Being, and sanctioned by Himself, there is another view shorter, and perhaps more intelligible to common apprehensions. Man's mind is a percipient organ — percipient of ideas. In itself it seems nothing, not even to possess consciousness. All its excellence depends on the truths which are written upon it. Like abstract matter, it is capable of receiving all forms, itself possessing none. And its excellence must depend on its assimilation to the nature of its Creator. Now God is the source and type of all good; and nothing can be good which does not reflect his image. And unless this image be reflected adequately in the creature; unless men and other spiritual beings form good conceptions of the attributes of God, God is not honoured by them. There is misrepresentation, falsity, error, blended with every act of religion, with every thought of God. We do not tolerate this ourselves in common life. That we

should be mistaken, not appreciated sufficiently, even thought too highly of, is painful, and provokes resentment. It is as if a mirror, from some defect in the glass, did not reflect a correct image of the face. And wherever this mistake takes place, it prevents all union of mind with mind. Not to understand each other, as it is termed, is the very expression most common to explain the absence of cordial sympathy and friendship. And it must be so in the relations of man to his God. Instead of supposing, as men now dare to suppose, that God has left this fundamental knowledge to be picked out by each individual for himself, fashioned after his own corrupt fancy, distorted and confused, or thrown aside as an idle speculation; he who knows the first want of human nature will rather expect to find that it is the grand basis of the whole scheme of revelation, as God himself has declared that it is the grand object of the creation of the world. Again and again the Scriptures speak of God, "who created all things by Jesus Christ; to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God" (Ephes. iii. 9). The knowledge of the Creator is the first condition requisite to the being of the creature: "in it standeth his eternal life."

And it is the first condition required by the Church in the rite of Baptism. The creed is repeated, and the answer demanded, "All this I steadfastly believe."

Now, what is this pledge of believing thus exacted? Few things seem so to perplex men's minds in the present day; and it is of great importance that we should rightly comprehend it. Does it mean, then, I believe it on the testimony of my understanding, that is, I can explain, perceive the consistency of each part with general principles and the

facts of experience; I can prove them syllogistically? Surely not. Where is even the philosopher who would venture to declare this? How much less the peasant and the child! Does it, again, imply that I will never doubt—that no difficulties shall arise in my mind, which I cannot solve? Surely not; for who could pledge himself to such a promise? But it does imply, that we receive these truths on the authority of those who declare them to us; that we believe their witness; distrust ourselves; are willing to submit ourselves to their guidance, recognise them in this point as our masters. The reasons why this is right, and the grounds of their authority, we may not know; but it is sufficient that we acknowledge the authority; and the rightfulness of its claims will be discerned afterwards. And this is the form in which all belief originates. *It is a belief in men rather than in truths;* and a belief in men from an instinct, which we have never yet analysed, and perhaps never may have occasion to prove to be consistent with reason, because rightly disposed hearts will never doubt it. A child believes all that he hears. Ask him, why? He can only answer, that his father has told him. Ask him, why he believes his father? He cannot tell; he feels that it is his father who tells him, and that is enough to make him believe. And happy will his lot be, if no evil doubt rises up in after-life, compelling him to find a reason for "the faith which is in him."

And the promise that he will believe is—what? How can any one "promise and vow" that he will maintain his conviction, in defiance of subsequent knowledge which may possibly be given? Can he promise, that if his belief should be found inconsistent with facts, he will still believe it to be consistent—that when he sees two things unequal, he will persist in believing them equal? No: but he can pro-

mise to do this,—to reject the doubt when it arises, to stand sentinel at the door of his heart, and prevent it from entering. He can turn away his thoughts to other things, close his eyes, avert his ears, as easily from a doubt of Christianity, as he does in every act of sin from the doubts which the Spirit of God suggests as to the goodness and prudence of his present conduct. So long as this is done, his belief is safe; for belief he has already. It was given to him in Baptism. He has been brought up beneath it; as a child he never doubted. He has only to maintain what he possesses already, and to prevent it from being snatched from him.

Hence it is that our Lord so repeatedly enjoins unhesitating faith. "Only believe;" and he exhorts to belief as something in our power—he reproaches men for a failure in it; because it is in our power to repel a doubt, as much as to guard against harbouring an unclean or malicious thought.

What, then, you will say, are we to close our eyes against the truth? No, not against the truth, but against a doubt; not against that which comes as a positive statement affirming some new fact, but against that which would overturn existing belief without substituting any thing in its place; not against affirmatives, but against negatives. Doubting is not truth, but the very destroyer of truth. If men would make this distinction, they would find no difficulty in reconciling the highest doctrine of implicit faith with the most ardent zeal for the possession of truth. Let us take one of the cases most likely to perplex us.

A Socinian has been brought up in a creed, which we, the members of the Catholic Church, know to be false and blasphemous, because it is contrary to the creed transmitted by Christ to his Apostles, by the Apostles to the Catholic Church, by

the Catholic Church to ourselves. A Deist, who rejects all revelation, comes to him, and endeavours to undermine the little faith he still possesses in the Scriptures. The Socinian would be bound to turn away his ears. He would say, I now possess some belief; and this, whatever it be, is better than none, to which you would reduce me. I have received it from parents, teachers, advisers, whom I was naturally bound to respect. I am pledged to them by the very fact of having been educated by them, as a man feels that he is bound to the political principles and party of his family, until he has reasons for abandoning them. But you give me no reasons; you do not offer me truth, instead of error; but, at the very utmost, no truth at all, instead of partial truth. And you do not offer me this upon any authority at all adequate to the authority under which I received it; for there is no religious sect whatever, how poor and contemptible it may be, which is not infinitely stronger and more worthy of respect than any individual, or even any body, of infidels. In the same manner a Mahometan would answer to an Atheist; a Romanist to an Epicurean; a Catholic, who adheres to the positive creed of the Catholic Church, to a mere Protestant, who thought less of retaining what was true than of lopping off what was false.

But instead of a Deist coming to the Socinian, let it be a true Catholic; and observe how the case is altered. The Catholic does not endeavour to take from the Socinian what he believes already, but to add to it. He says, You believe in the humanity of our Lord; believe also in his Divinity. You believe that God is one; believe also that in that unity are three Persons. You believe that repentance is necessary to wipe away sin; believe also that something more is required—the atonement of Christ. You

think that each man should acquaint himself with the grounds of his faith: you are right; but admit also that he should be guided by the testimony of others. You recognise the necessity of religious congregations; admit also the being of a Church.

Or, again, let the Papist come to a member of the Catholic Church in England. He calls on me to respect the pope; I have no objection to respect him, until he requires some allegiance, which I cannot give without abandoning the constitution of the Catholic Church. He bids me shew reverence to saints; I do reverence them, up to the point when it would interfere with the exclusive worship of and mediation of our blessed Lord. He prescribes fasting and mortification, almsgiving, confession, as means of grace. In their way they are means of grace; they may all conduce to good, and all may be adopted, so far as not to clash with the previous doctrine that no man can be saved by any works of his own. He insists on the mystery of the holy sacraments; I admit it fully—go with him willingly in his belief of a supernatural inward grace accompanying the outward sign, until he comes to a point, when he destroys the outward sign by the doctrine of transubstantiation.

Or apply the case to common life.

A traveller brings us intelligence of a new continent, a new species of animal, an extraordinary eclipse, a fresh earthquake. Here is something additional to our present knowledge. Are we to reject it, because it is additional—because it is new? or shall we try the possibility of holding it with our former creed? And all things may be held together except absolute contradictions. But he brings us a seeming contradiction: he declares, that a fact occurred at a place and time when we were present ourselves and saw nothing of the kind. Now, this

is a seeming contradiction. Is it a real contradiction? Certainly not; for my seeing an object, and its being present before me, are not the same proposition. *My* statement is, that I saw it not; *his*, that, whether I saw it or not, it really took place. How am I to decide? I answer, that I should decide by testimony. And if a number of trustworthy persons coincided with the traveller, I should give up my own opinion; I should say, that for my senses to be out of order and deceive me, was far more probable than that a number of others should be so deceived. And, on the same ground, I should reject his statement, if the balance of witnesses were with myself.

Here, then, are the two circumstances which, if man presumes to demand the reason of a positive command from God, explain the wisdom of peremptorily insisting on the exclusion of all doubt from the mind of a member of the Catholic Church. They shew the wisdom of insisting on a pledge, vow, or promise, that he will hold fast what he has been taught. It is in his power to exclude doubt, as much as to exclude any other evil thought. It is his moral duty to do so; because until a new Church comes before him, surpassing the authority of the old—until a new system of belief is placed in his hands, by a body of hereditary teachers of 1800 years' standing, and equal to the Catholic Church in its claims to an historical revelation—he is bound not to depart from the rules to which he is pledged already.

And so far of the purely intellectual bearings of that creed, which the Christian Church enforces on the belief of all her members, at their first entrance into her communion.

But, besides a principle within man which perceives and compares ideas, and derives from their

relations the notions of true and false, equal and unequal, and the like, man has another principle—that of action. He is, to all appearance, the original source of motion to innumerable and infinite trains of causes and effects. It is in this light that he becomes a moral being, in that restricted sense of the word, which conveys the idea of virtue and vice, punishment and reward, merit and demerit, responsibility and freedom. And this principle is addressed by the Church, when she requires a second pledge. "Wilt thou, then, obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?"[1] The same pledge, as we have seen before, was exacted by the ancient Church, under the form of an open renunciation of Satan, and of adherence to Christ.

Let us consider, then, what are the answers here given by the Church to some of the principal questions in the science of morals.

1. First, then, the Church agrees with all human ethical schools, in insisting, as a preliminary condition of goodness, *that it should come from the heart.* If man is compelled against his will to be liberal, or merciful, or just, or to expose himself to danger, or to observe moderation in his enjoyments, whatever be the nature of his external acts—however conducive to good, or agreeable to the law which a good man would lay down—they want the primary condition of virtue; what Aristotle calls the προαίρεσις; Bishop Butler, the principle of virtue; modern philosophers, free will, or, to use a more intelligible word, free agency. She deals with the person to be baptised, as with one who has the power of choosing between two courses, and whose conduct is to be determined not by an external influence, compelling

[1] Baptismal Service.

him to act in one way, while his will moves in another; but by the decision of his own heart. And such is the fact with the Christian. The action does proceed from his will; the will is within him. It may be, and we know is, infused by God; but it is infused so secretly, that the external influence is not distinguishable from the internal spontaneous movement, and, at least, the suffering which attends it is internal. And if we ask, why this condition is necessary for moral goodness; it is because the proper and only subject of contemplation, when we speak of virtue and vice, punishment and reward, praise and blame, is the mind itself. The act is nothing, except as indicating the state of the mind. And thus the most opposite acts will sometimes seem equally good; and precisely the same act will appear either good or evil, according to the state of the will from which it flows. Clytemnestra kills Agamemnon. Does she think merely of screening her adultery from detection? The guilt is deadly. Does she consider herself as the nearest of kin to Iphigenia, whom Agamemnon had murdered before, and whom, by the old traditionary laws of Greece, she was bound to avenge in like manner? She is acting under law. And as such Æschylus has represented her. So Abraham sacrificing his son, and the Canaanites making their children pass through the fire to Moloch, are two wholly different characters, though their outward acts are the same. One acts from obedience to a positive law; the other from an idolatrous superstition.

Again, a general of an army, when the battle commences, places himself in the safest position in the rear. A common soldier who did this would be shot. And his virtue is to post himself in front. And yet both act with the same view, to obey orders. The general is bound, by his duty to his

troops, not to risk his own safety; the soldier, to risk it.

This condition in an act, that it should flow from the will, is so essential to our notions of goodness, that schools which have insisted on describing man as a merely mechanical agent, swayed about by external motives, as one billiard-ball is impelled by another, have been obliged to destroy the distinctions between good and evil, praise and blame, and to regard all actions alike as equally irresponsible and indifferent, except in the expediency of their results.

One important remark may be made on this head. It does not follow, because free agency or determinate will is necessary to make an action good, that it should also be necessary to make an action bad. On the contrary, it seems impossible that a bad man should ever act *wilfully*, that is, with deliberate choice—προαιρετικῶς. The statement will seem strange and dangerous. But let us remember that no man can obliterate from his reason the natural preference of virtue over vice. It does not seem possible that the intellect should ever make a mistake in choosing between them. And so experience proves, that when men sin, they sin confessing at the same time that they sin against their will, under the force of temptation, or the impulse of passion. Secondly, though some voluntary movement must take place in their mind before they can act, there is a wide difference between the determination of a bad man, after balancing between actions, to do what is wrong, and the determination of a good man to do what is good. The former is a resolution to abandon farther struggle; the latter to continue it. One folds his arms, and allows himself to be carried down the stream; the other nerves them to a more vigorous effort. In one sense they are both acting wilfully; but the will is deliberate choice solely in

the case of the good man. Thirdly, this absence of deliberate choice does not relieve the bad man from his responsibility, or from our moral disapprobation. For it is this very absence which constitutes his vice. It is the want of this power[1] to fight against temptation—it is the passive indolence and submissiveness, with which he abandons the struggle, which we dislike, and despise, and punish, and which renders his mind worthless, and fit only for destruction. It is to overcome this, that the discipline of nature and Christianity is mainly framed. Nature deals with man as with a timid cowardly child. She endeavours to provoke him to rise up and fight. And if he will not move, then he is discarded, as unfit for any post of honour or power.

2. Secondly, the Church, in exacting its pledge of obedience, answers another very important question in the science of Ethics; and one which, notwithstanding the many recent discussions on moral subjects, has been strangely neglected.

The word *moral* is used in several senses. Sometimes it is opposed to material—as the moral world to the physical world—and in this sense it means *mental;* and implies, as we have just seen, that the subject of ethical science is *mind*, not *matter*. But it is also opposed to the intellect and to taste. Thus we distinguish between a man's moral and intellectual habits—between that which is morally beautiful, and that which pleases the imagination. We apply, indeed, the same terms to all classes of objects, which please or displease us: for instance, a good mathematician; a bad poet; a right calculation, and a right motive; a noble architectural design, and a noble act of heroism; a wrong argument, and a wrong feeling. But it is evident, that there is a wide difference in the nature of the subjects to

[1] The ἐνέργεια of Aristotle.

which these words are attached. And what is this difference? Aristotle makes it to consist mainly in the mixture of feelings, appetites, and desires, with that class of actions which are peculiarly called moral, and in the uncertainty and contingency of their nature, as contrasted with the mathematical demonstration to which others are reducible. But the Church evidently makes another and a more correct distinction. As we have seen before, there are in the world two classes of objects—persons and things. And these are mutually related to each other. There are relations between persons and persons, and between things and things. And the peculiar distinction of moral actions, moral characters, moral principles, moral habits, as contrasted with the intellect and other parts of man's nature, lies in this, *that they always imply a relation between two persons*, not between two things. You compare the three angles of a triangle with two right angles—both subjects compared are things; you perceive the relation between them, but it is a purely intellectual process. You take up Pope's translation of Homer; you contrast it with the original, remark its inferiority; the relation is between two things, and there is nothing moral in it. You calculate sums; study facts of history; syllogise; observe the accordance of works of art with certain rules and standards; praise the proportions of a building, the correctness of a design; censure an ill-contrived machine, a coarse painting, harsh music. In each and all you use the terms good or bad, right or wrong, according as the relations which you find exhibited coincide with the relations in which the two objects appear to you. If you believe that Oxford is distant from London sixty miles, and a topographer names eighty, you disapprove, censure his statement. It is false, wrong, bad; but still the error is not moral.

If an architect builds a Christian Church on a Grecian plan, you, who would wish to see a correspondence between the material building and the purpose for which it is employed, are shocked with the incongruity. Still the fault is not properly speaking moral. But the moment you consider such questions, not as a mere relation between two things, but as a relation between two persons, then immediately they will assume a moral character. You will praise and blame with very different sentiments —with much more keenness. The idea of responsibility, of conscience, of punishment, of reward, of merit and demerit, will come in; and the words good and bad, right and wrong, will be used in their restricted and peculiar sense.

Let us illustrate this. The owner of an estate cuts down some trees. You compare two things—the view now opened with the confinement of it before; and you call the act good. But the owner has children, for whom he should have preserved the timber. Here is the relation of one person to another person; and you call it unjust. Or he is in debt, and does it to satisfy his creditors; here, again, is the relation of a person to a person, and it is a moral act. A man gambles; he plays cards with great success. You see in it nothing but intellectual skill, applied to calculate contingencies and gain his end; and you admire it, as you would admire any ingenious machine or clever contrivance. But he ruins those from whom he wins—he hazards the property of others—he wastes in play the time which he owes to God—he irritates and corrupts his mind, over which he is placed by God to preserve it in sobriety and order—he encourages bad habits in others. Instantly gambling becomes an immoral act. A clerk in a banking-house casts up an account. His calculation does not coincide with the real items; it is

wrong: but the error is not moral; it is intellectual. But conceive him as injuring his master's interest, or desiring to defraud yourself, or as merely neglecting to exercise that control over his own thoughts which he was bound as a reasoning being to exercise, and immediately the act becomes moral. A Dissenter holds certain speculative opinions on the Divine nature. Merely as metaphysical tenets they may be false or true, right or wrong; but no one would punish or condemn him. But he holds them in defiance of an authority which he ought to respect; in publishing them he is misleading others; the holding of them dishonours Almighty God; the very permitting his mind to remain in error is an injustice to it, is mischievous to it; and he stands to it in the same relation as a parent to a child, bound to procure for it all good, and to save it from all evil: and thus an erroneous theological dogma becomes a moral crime.

One man is fond of theatrical amusements. So far his taste may be good or bad; but simply as taste, the propensity is not a subject for moral approbation or censure. But bring in the consideration of the unhappy persons whom he encourages to engage in a profession ruinous to their own minds, and it becomes a vice. Another man writes a poem. It may be correct, elegant, sublime, or just the reverse. But no one calls it immoral till the thought arises of some person whom it will corrupt, or whose laws it violates.

And let it be remembered that there are three kinds of persons between whom relations may be perceived. *First*, as between Cicero and Augustus, between Socrates and Anytus, where the two parties are distinct individuals. *Secondly*, where one or both the parties is a corporate person—as between a citizen and his country, a student and his college,

a Christian and the Church, a member of any society and the society itself; for corporations as well as individuals are persons, and have their rights and duties as clearly defined. The *third* case is between a man and himself. For the mind of man is not absolutely one, but is divisible into three persons. Take, for instance, a sentiment of remorse. Macbeth, a thinking being, contemplates *himself* as the murderer of Duncan, and then compares himself in that character with himself in another character, as benefited and trusted by his victim. Hence the consciousness of his guilt. It is the same Macbeth in each of the three characters. But without this distinctness and separation of the persons, co-existing with the unity of substance in the mind itself, there could be no conscience. Hence we speak of a man commanding himself, admiring himself, censuring himself, loving himself. His mind takes the form of two persons, as distinctly separated, and therefore as capable of relations between themselves —as Socrates and Anytus, father and son, a king and a subject. Hence it is that many acts are decidedly immoral, which, nevertheless, may not seem to bear in any way upon other persons without us. Idleness, frivolity, self-indulgence, may be conceived to exist, where they may even be beneficial to others. But the moral eye regards the mind as standing in a certain relation to itself—as bound, that is, to check its own inclinations, to rear itself up in dignity and hardihood. And when it fails to do this, it is censured.

Is this sufficient to hint at the essential feature in moral actions, as distinguished from other mental operations to which also we apply generally the terms good and bad? It is the perception of relations between persons, and not between things. And the Church sums up the principle in making all good-

ness consist in obedience to a person—even to God.

From this head may be deduced several important corollaries, which I will briefly touch on.

First, it explains why our moral sense is more or less acute in proportion to the warm, affectionate, humble character of the heart. Men who are accustomed to regard nothing in the world but things; who are absorbed in physical or metaphysical science, or in mathematics; who are proud, or selfish, or conceited, and look on other men as their property, or, at least, as wholly independent of them; such men are in the eye of Scripture the most immoral. They want the faculty of perceiving the very facts on which moral duties depend. It is like a person being blind, whose whole business is to measure distances with his eye.

Secondly, you may see what kind of secondary motives God employs, and man also may employ in education, without the danger of suppressing the real moral principles. We often doubt how far pleasure and pain, hope and fear, may be used as incentives to goodness; how far emulation, shame, ambition, should be encouraged, as the means of stimulating a proper moral activity. Now so far as these are selfish, and we accustom the young to think in them of their own enjoyment, so far they are evidently wrong and mischievous. But so far as they are intended to bring before their eyes, and accustom them always to reflect on the persons with whom they are surrounded, the affections and actions thus generated, though not yet perfect, inasmuch as they do not yet flow from a knowledge of God, or a principle of obedience to him, yet are in themselves parts of a virtuous habit. If a star were shot forth into the abyss of space, to move round the sun, it must learn, as it were, the existence of that central

sun, and owning the law of gravitation, turn and bend round to it in its whole course. And yet it might be also good, it might even be necessary at first, for it to learn the existence and feel the attractions of other stars and planets, which might by similar laws of gravitation check it from wandering far. And this especially, if those stars were so arranged, that their conjoined forces should keep it moving in the proper line, even before it knew the sun on which that line depended. And thus God has arranged mankind. And men discern and feel the attractions of their fellow-men, of parents, brothers, friends, kings, teachers, rulers, long before they understand their true relation to God himself. And yet gratitude to parents, loyalty to kings, love to friends, faith in teachers, are in themselves virtuous affections, imperfect indeed, and almost worthless, until religion comes in to bind man's mind to move simply and uniformly in one clear orbit round the throne of his Maker,—yet still not vicious like self-love. And their attractions are so constructed, that, if fully felt, they keep men pretty nearly in the same path of earthly duty which God himself would require; for no man fails to encourage those whom he loves or rules in doing good. And it is also the interest of rulers, as well as their duty, when a wandering spirit would attach itself to them, to lead it up to another object of affection, God himself; for without the authority of God, their own rights over him are null and void. Moreover, also, as the relations in which man stands to his fellow-man are analogous to, and typical of, the relations in which he stands to God, as that of son to father, brother to brother, pupil to teacher, a poor man to a benefactor, a criminal to a judge; so by accustoming himself to discern these human relations, and to act upon them, he prepares himself to discern and to act on

his similar relations to God. This is the connexion between heathen morality and the reception of Christianity; between a child's obedience to his parents, love of his brothers, reverence for his superiors, and the piety to which they should lead, and without which they are worthless. It would be well for you to illustrate these principles, by observing how the Bible deals with our domestic and human affections; encouraging them when they lead up to religion; condemning them when they interfere with it; requiring that they should be made instrumental in teaching religion; and looking with far more indulgence on excesses of affection than on the want of it. You might also trace in St. Paul's Epistles the same principle of analogy preserved between our human and divine relations. Observe, also, how the secondary motives of fear and hope are employed in the Old Testament, not in any way to encourage the principle of selfishness, or to make virtue a mere matter of calculation; but to bring clearly and palpably before man the presence of God. Hence punishments, which far overbalance the seeming offence, (as in the case of Uzzah), and which yet would strongly impress on the mind the awfulness of God. Hence blessings, the only blessings which a sensual eye could appreciate, to bring before them his infinite goodness. Hence also the peculiar need of a manifestation of a particular providence in the Jewish dispensation.

Thirdly, another corollary to be drawn, regards the connexion between the intellect and what are commonly called our moral actions. If our moral duties and affections depend on the relations of persons to persons, these relations are as much the subject of intellectual discovery and perception, as the relations of abstract things; as of two to four, of the square of the hypothenuse to the squares of the two

sides, of the copy of a picture to the original. Hence in every right moral action there is an exercise of thought, to ascertain these relations—what Aristotle terms βουλεῦσις. And a failure in this is just as much a subject for moral censure as a failure in feeling or affection. In fact, the feeling depends necessarily on the perception of the relation, and the action on the feeling. If a man is grateful to his benefactor, he must shew it in his works. If he understands the benefit, the sacrifices made to secure it, his own previous wants and other circumstances, which enhance a kindness, he cannot avoid being grateful. Wherever there is a deficiency either in action or in feeling, it is to be traced to a defect, either voluntary or involuntary, in the perception of the relations. Sometimes a man may be ignorant of them, without having had the means of ascertaining them, as when Œdipus kills his father. Sometimes he is prevented from inquiring into them by passion or folly, as when the Jews crucified our Lord. Sometimes he miscalculates their nature, as when St. Paul persecuted the Christians. But to every case alike, it is remarkable to observe, that nature has attached some punishment. Whatever may be the condition of heathens in another world, it is certain that their ignorance of Christianity is a positive evil to them here; just as a man's ignorance of the intention of a murderer is followed by his own death, without reference to his carelessness, or inability to make himself acquainted with the fact. God, indeed, seems purposely to punish ignorance with the utmost severity, in order to set us on correcting it, and keep us always alive and watchful in observing and searching for the true relations in which we stand to other beings. It is the absence of this watchfulness which constitutes our viciousness. Hence, also, we may see the connexion be-

tween the creeds of Christianity and practical religion, as it is called; two things which in this day men are so desirous to dissever. For as all our piety to God must flow from a knowledge of his nature, alter in the least point our conception of that nature, and our devotional affections must alter likewise. All the questions (falsely called metaphysical speculations,) respecting the Divine nature, which the Church was compelled to pronounce on, by the heresies in the first four centuries, were just as practical as those of a later time respecting man's free will, or justification by faith or works. The Athanasian Creed is as much the basis of Christian morality, so far as morality is a part of religion, and religion a part of morality, as the Ten Commandments. Bishop Butler has already shewn this.[1] Admit the doctrines of Arius, and our entire devotion to our Lord as to Almighty God must sink into mere respect for a superior creature. Follow the heresy of Macedonius, and immediately you abandon all devotion to the Holy Spirit. Mistake the slightest point in the combined human and divine nature of our Lord, and the whole character of our affections towards him must fall into error likewise. And so of other points. Not, remember, that the moral influence of a theological doctrine, was, or ought to be, the reason for maintaining it. If it be a truth committed by God to the keeping of the Church, whatever its abstract or its practical character, the Church would be equally bound rigidly to preserve it inviolate. And this was the ground taken by the early defenders of catholic doctrines against heresies. But this moral influence may be worthy of notice, as exposing the sophistry which would distinguish between theology and religion; as if religion could be inculcated where theo-

[1] Analogy, part ii. chap. 1.

logy was not taught, or as if moral duties had no connexion with the maintenance of a definite creed.

Fourthly, we may learn the origin of our moral sentiments. How is it that men approve or disapprove of certain actions, call them right or wrong, and consequently desire to punish or reward them? The process is the same which takes place in any other perception of relations between two objects. I see a tree forty feet high, by the side of another only twenty feet high. I contrast the two, place them side by side, pass from one to the other; and there rises up in my mind an idea of relation between them, a consciousness of superior magnitude in one, of less magnitude in the other. Now, this notion of greater or less is not derived from the sight of either tree by itself, but from the comparison between the two. It is like the plant, which the sun and the soil give birth to; it is neither in the sun, nor in the soil, but is produced by the joint action of the two. Or as the pain which follows a blow; it is neither in the stick, nor in the body, but results from them both. Or like a musical note, which is neither the impulse of the hand, nor the vibration of the string, but is born from them together. And musical notes, indeed, which lie dormant and buried in the chords, without our being able to anticipate them before experience, or to call them out without striking the strings, are a fair illustration of all those ideas and feelings produced by the contemplation of two objects in relation to each other. Let any one examine his own ideas—of number, for instance, space, time, proportion, causality, effect, coincidence, magnitude, motion,—and he will see at once what a multitude of our ideas are ideas of relation. If the truth were told at once, I ought to say, that a vast number, if not all, are perceptions of relation between two objects, of neither of which are we conscious, or know

any thing of them, but the relation in which they stand to each other. It is a strange statement, but true. For instance, no one knows any thing of God, but relations, which he has been pleased to reveal between himself and his creatures. And no one knows any thing of his own mind, but its relations to other things; and yet, what is religion but a sense of the relation between our mind and God? So the notion of a line is that of a certain relation between one point and another; but a point itself is invisible. No one ever saw a point, which is without length, or breadth, or thickness. This is another mystery of our nature: but I will not dwell on it, further than to repeat, that all our knowledge is, in fact, a perception of relations.

Now, from whence do these ideas of relation come? They are implanted in us by Nature. They lie dormant in the mind of every human being, are unalterable, eternal. Wherever they seem to vary, the variation arises, not from a different idea following the perception of the same relations, but from the perception of seemingly the same thing in different relations. Take an octagon building; paint each side of a different colour. Fix eight men fronting severally each side. Call them away, and ask them the colour of the building; and each will give a different account. Now, where does the falsehood lie? Do the same external colours produce different impressions on different eyes? Is the evidence of the senses uncertain? Are there no fixed principles of sensation? No: the mistake lies in a false inference. Each man, instead of confining his statement simply to the part which he saw, declares that the whole building, which he did not see, is of the same colour with the part that faced him. His senses are correct: his belief would be correct, if he would not fancy more than he really perceived.

Shift the parties, and try if, when placed before the same side, they all agree in seeing black, or blue, or red, or yellow, where the colour really exists.

So it is with the perception of relations between persons or minds. The feelings resulting from the perception of them are natural to us — they are interwoven with us from our birth — cannot be eradicated—are universal, eternal. In no man were they ever altered — not perhaps even in monsters. Nor, perhaps, would it be possible to conceive that they should be mutable, without inferences leading also to the mutability of the Divine attributes. But it is possible to see the same action in very different relations. Brutus puts some human beings to death: it is murder. They are his children: the murder becomes more horrible. But he condemns them as a magistrate: the act ceases instantly to be criminal. But the safety of his country requires it: it may become even meritorious. A Spartan boy steals: the act is criminal. But he is commanded by the laws: it becomes excusable. The practice is admitted by his fellow-citizens: it becomes innocent. It encourages activity of mind, and makes him hardy and capable of defending his country: it may be even praiseworthy. Now, in these cases of seeming differences of opinion, in reality it is not the same act which is contemplated, but different sides of the same act. Let all men see the same side, and all will agree. Each is right in his own statement, if his statement be confined to that part of the action of which he is speaking. There is no variety in our moral sentiments; but many points of view in which the same objects may be regarded.

Now, to return to the illustration of the building: if the man who had been placed opposite to the green side heard another declare that the building was black, he would pronounce the statement false

or wrong. If a person, whom we believe guilty, is acquitted by a judge, who believes him innocent, the judge is condemned by us. If a man, who has large claims on him from his children, refuses to assist a charity, and we know nothing of these claims, and believe him rich, we pronounce him illiberal. That is, in every case we have ourselves a notion of a certain relation between two parties, and of the duty flowing from it; and when these parties act in a different way, then our moral sense is shocked. Place before us the real relation in which they stand, and our moral judgment will instantly change. Thus it is the perception of true relations on which depends our right moral action. And moral education consists in impressing on minds the knowledge of these relations: as when we are taught that God is our Father; that Jesus Christ is our Saviour; that our parents are representatives of God; that kings and magistrates are God's ministers; that the Church is our mother; that all mankind are our natural brethren, and all true members of the Church our spiritual brethren. There is little or no effort made to produce right actions or right feelings immediately, because these will flow spontaneously when the relations are known, and thoroughly worked into our practical consciousness by accustoming ourselves to act upon them. Thus, to repeat it, Socrates and Plato consider virtue as a science—the science of relations between persons, ἐπιστήμη. On the other hand, the progress of vice consists, not in deadening or extirpating the feelings—for, after the most confirmed habits of profligacy, let a vail be taken from the heart, and they spring up in their fullest vigour, as keen as ever; and if it were possible to extirpate them, and thus change our whole perceptions of right and wrong, there is no saying what consequences might follow;—but it consists in so accustoming the

mind to a certain train of *thought* — to see persons and actions in only one relation, and that the wrong one—that this train becomes sunk and imbedded in our nature, and cannot be torn out. The neck is twisted, and fixed for ever in that position. Thus a sensualist closes his eyes constantly to the dignity of his spiritual nature, and the degradation of his animal propensities, till at last he forgets that he has any spiritual nature at all, and becomes a mere animal. An injured person dwells on the injury and on the thought of revenge, till no explanation can undeceive him; and he cannot be reconciled to his enemy. A coward sees nothing but his relation to himself; and no sense of honour or disgrace will touch him. A man plunged in material speculations loses sight of his connexion with spiritual beings; and the thought of them cannot be forced into his mind, thus previously occupied. The thoughts are the seat of the evil. And as we are born without a knowledge of these relations, and can only learn them by degrees, and are constantly forming wrong judgments of them, hence the necessity of a moral education, the length of time which it takes, and the difficulty of carrying it on.

What, then, are these relations between persons, and what are the moral affections and actions attached to them by God?

The answer to this question also has been given by the Church, in her demand of obedience at baptism. Moralists usually distinguish a variety of relations; for instance, of a child to a parent—a parent to a child—a citizen to his country—a friend to a friend—that of brother, relative, neighbour, teacher, pupil, husband, wife; and under these heads are classed the various duties of life. Christianity takes a different view, and names but one — our relation to God.

The Church speaks only of obeying God. And if in the Catechism our various duties to our neighbours are analysed and enumerated as distinct branches, they are all drawn out from this one root, and are made to depend upon it. The distinction is most important. I propose to explain why.

Observe, then, first, some remarkable *facts* in the constitution of our nature. First, the mind is not capable of containing more than one object at a time; secondly, by the law of association, it has a tendency to absorb itself continually in one and the same object; thirdly, its affections seem incapable of full development unless engrossed in one end; and, fourthly, the understanding itself, which Nature has laid under the law of unity, requires that all its thoughts should be reducible under some one head, and all its actions under some one end. This has before been stated generally. But from these conditions results the necessity of attaching the mind to some one person, placing it in some one relation, to which all others may be subordinated. Thus Nature, in her arrangement of society, has carefully observed a binary combination. Marriage is the union of one with one: polygamy is full of evil. Friendship, in its full development, can scarcely exist between more than two. Loyalty attaches us to one sovereign. The child, though placed under two parents, yet is taught to regard them as one. The moment many persons claim from us either affection or obedience, we become distracted, embarrassed, and incapable of action.

Hence the perplexity of casuistry, when opposite duties seem to clash; as, for instance, those of Brutus to his country and his children — those of Athanasius to his sovereign and his Church—those of Clytemnestra to her husband and her daughter—those of a missionary to his family and his God.

And no one can have been placed in the midst of such a distressing collision, or have examined the cases of conscience with which casuistical books are loaded, without seeing that there are inextricable difficulties connected with the theory of many moral relations and many moral duties; and that at least no ordinary mind can ever hope to solve them. Hence, where this principle is avowed, the desire of placing itself under some infallible guide; hence the introduction of confession; hence the false and mischievous ethical doctrines of casuistry in general; and the bad ethical character of Romanism and the Jesuits. And practically, as we might expect, men do not admit of this plurality of duties: they adopt some one predominating object, and to this they sacrifice, as they must do, all others. A patriot takes his country, a wife her husband, a friend his friend, a mother her favourite child, a soldier his general, a loyalist his king. And when the struggle comes, each follows the person of his choice; just as, in more common pursuits, each man abandons himself exclusively to some one favourite end, and despises all others.

And yet men do stand in various relations to various moral beings, and upon each a duty follows. The very existence of another moral being binds us down immediately to certain actions and affections towards him. Reveal to a shipwrecked sailor in a desert island that another being like himself is on it, and what a crowd of new thoughts and obligations instantly rise up! In the oft-repeated maxim of our old legal writers, a mere companion is a law to us. "Qui habet comitem habet magistrum." Even a child requires us to treat him with respect:

> "Maxima debetur pueris reverentia."—JUVENAL.

Even the presence of an animal as a witness has

been known to produce shame, and to prevent the commission of a crime.

Observe, therefore, how here also the problem again recurs to which I have so often alluded, of reconciling plurality with unity. How shall we reduce all these various, and often discordant duties, under one simple rule? How reconcile these contrary relations, so as to make them one?

It is by the same mode by which physical science reduces all the various phenomena of the material world under certain uniform heads; by which philosophy traces up the infinite variety of human actions to a few general principles; by which theology reads in the seemingly fragmentary and unconnected facts of Scripture only the one creed of Christianity; by which thousands of distinct individuals are held together quietly and harmoniously in one society. Let each insulated fact be made the type and representation of one common principle, and at once they fall into unity, however diversified in their accidental circumstances. Thus, in the Scriptures, as was said before, the cross of Christ is seen in the tree of life, in the wood of the sacrifice laid on the shoulders of Isaac, in the rod of Moses, in the pole on which the serpent hung, in the staff of David, in the wood of the ark, in the bough thrown into the bitter waters. So the mystery of Baptism is read in the deep which covered the earth, in the waters of the deluge, in the Red Sea, in Jordan, in the waters of the Nile turned into blood, in the pitcher of water changed into wine at the marriage of Cana, in the water borne by the man who prepared the room for our Lord's passover. And so of the other mysteries of Christianity. And thus also in civil society. To govern a nation, there must be a multitude of officers, each to a certain degree an independent agent. How shall they be prevented

from distracting it by different authorities? Let all of them, judges, magistrates, ministers, military officers, police, derive their power from one fountain-head — the king; let the royal authority be borne by each, so that to resist a king's officer is to resist the king himself,—and the problem is solved. And so, to quit illustrations, let all our relations to other beings be considered as only parts and types of our one relation to Almighty God, and all our duties be binding on us because He has made them binding; and in blessing, obeying, protecting, teaching, controlling others, let us act but in one capacity, as doing the will of God; and the work is at once accomplished of clearing away the perplexities of casuistry, and tracing in all our actions one simple rule, from which the simplest mind will find it difficult to err, at least from ignorance.

Now, all the moral relations in which we can stand to other beings may be classed under three heads—creation, preservation, and destruction.

The duties of creation contain those which a parent owes to his child, a teacher to his pupil, a king to his people; such as conveying to the minds of others life, goodness, wisdom, strength—improving, instructing, rearing them up in holiness and knowledge.

Those of preservation include justice, obedience, temperance, self-denial—every act which guards the rights of others, abstains from hurting their feelings, from corrupting their minds, violating their inclinations, tempting them to evil. They are the constituent elements of love.

Those of destruction, on the other hand, extend only to the bad. They are such as are suggested by our moral indignation at vice — by the necessity of defending good, and extirpating evil. Hatred at injustice or evil is as natural and as great a virtue

as love of good: the two cannot be separated. And as we delight in preserving the good, so we delight in destroying evil. It is a part of our moral nature. Aristotle calls it *νέμεσις*.

Now, consider that these are the identical relations in which Almighty God stands to all his creatures. He is their Maker, Teacher, Saviour, Judge. Man, in fact, is made in the image of his Maker. He was placed from the first in a position of authority. He is the type of God upon earth. As, therefore, Almighty God would deal with his creatures, man in all his actions may deal with his fellow-beings.

But consider, also, that he is constantly acting in these relations. Analyse all the impulses and occupations of life, and what are they but the human mind working to one or other of these ends? Ask every man the motive of his every action, and he will answer, that it is to create something, or preserve something, or destroy something.

Consider, thirdly, that all the power which he exerts in these actions is purely derivative and permissive; that by himself, by his own arm, except as armed with power from God, he can neither create, nor preserve, nor destroy. All his efforts must be vain and futile. They are the impotent convulsive movements of a madman, or a child bound down by a stronger hand.

It follows, that in every one of these relations, unless man acts as the representative and delegate of God, as doing God's will, he must act wrongly. Perhaps, we may say rather, he cannot act at all; but ought rather to be considered as the unconscious minister of some other power—probably a power of evil—spreading mischief around him, under the temporary permission and long-suffering of Him, who is the absolute Lord and Master of the whole universe.

Then add, that he is placed here under a solemn command from God to do all things to His honour, to conform himself in all things to His will, to let no duty or desire interfere with his duty to his Maker; and it becomes clear, that any notion of a plurality of duties is incompatible with the singleness of devotion to which he is bound by God. It is equally clear, that in following God's commands in all things, he must be at the same time fulfilling all his duties to man; for man is not his own property, but God's; and notwithstanding God has appointed man his delegate, He has still reserved to Himself all the real power and authority. Man is His minister of good; as the channel, which conveys the water, assists in nourishing the plants. And as the will of God must be the absolute standard of all right, whatever He commands must be good.

Thus it is that all our moral relations and duties are properly held together, and reducible into the one relation and one duty of fulfilling the will of God. We are placed here like soldiers. A soldier also has many duties; to advance, to retreat, to assist his comrades to mount a breach, to destroy the enemy. But so long as his commander retains in his own hand the knowledge and government of all the operations of the battle, so long all these duties are summed up in one—that of obedience. He has no right to speculate, inquire, consult his reason, act upon his conscience. He must make himself a mere machine, to be moved about unresistingly by the will of another. The moment he abandons this character, he becomes, as a soldier, worthless.

And this truth seems to be intimated in such passages as the following:

"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Matt.

x. 37). "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke xiv. 26). "If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own self, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers . . . . thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him: but thou shalt kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people" (Deut. xiii. 8).

The very trial of Abraham's faith, in the sacrifice of his son Isaac, is a sufficient illustration of the principle.

But it will be seen still more clearly, by considering the nature of moral obligation in general. The very word *obligation* brings us at once to acknowledge some law from a superior authority, by which we are tied, bound down, restrained, when our own tendency is to act in an opposite direction. No man is conscious of being tied or fettered, till he attempts to move his arms or feet beyond the length of the chain. And then he feels its resistance. In the same manner, there are certain propensities of our nature, which are constantly checked and thwarted by a voice and a power from without. The commands of parents, the laws of the state, the admonitions of the Church, the secret presages and misgivings which rise up within us under the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, the anticipations of punishment drawn from past experience, or from the sufferings of others, the recollection of the vanity and misery of sinful indulgence—all these, which

combine together, and form what we call our conscience, act as an external monitor opposed to our natural inclinations; but of which, nevertheless, it is impossible to deny the authority. If a bad man is bent on selfish indulgences, the balance of selfish indulgence is clearly on the side of virtue. If he is a calculator of prudential considerations, virtue is clearly the best policy. If of a cultivated and reasoning mind, vice is in itself irrational. If of an affectionate, tender-hearted disposition, vice is always full of discord, and virtue of love. If ambitious, vice is essentially in itself weakness and degradation, and virtue is liberty and power. And thus it is impossible for any one whatever not to acknowledge the superior authority of that conscience which would prohibit us from vice. But, then, conscience is evidently the result of a power external to ourselves. If it were created by ourselves, we should be able, as we should certainly desire, to make it say only what we like. "It would speak unto us smooth things, and prophesy deceit." Whereas its essential character, the only capacity in which it makes its appearance, or can be trusted, is when it threatens, chastises, rebukes, condemns, confines. It is a law external to ourselves. But a law implies a legislator. Without a legislator, a law is null and void. And who is the legislator, whose law is conscience, but Almighty God, who speaks to us through its voice? Who framed domestic and civil society, so that whether delivering traditional instructions, or the results of their own reasoning, still both parents and kings are, and must be, admonishers against vice, and its punishers? Who so constructed nature, that intemperance brings sickness, dishonesty shame, cruelty hatred, illiberality contempt, and thus that pain must follow upon sin? Who, again, has given to our genuine affections their charm and energy?

Who has implanted in us that earnest desire of freedom from the temptations and oppressions of the flesh, and sounded perpetually in our ears, as with the blast of a trumpet, the cry to rouse ourselves to fight them? Some Being must have planned all this. Without the thought of a designing hand, of a Maker who willed that we should act as his warnings point out, of a Judge who will punish us, if we follow what he condemns, these warnings and condemnations are a dead letter.

And therefore, when men would enforce obedience to virtue by the authority of prudence, or reason, or conscience, or human law, or the instinct of benevolence, or calculations of expediency, each of these must still be traced up to the Being who has declared his will through these intimations, and must rest on the *one authority of Almighty God.*

I might state the same fact in a more abstract and metaphysical form, in which it will be less intelligible, but may exercise the minds which are disposed to think.

Human reason cannot conceive the existence of two ultimate independent principles of action, or two supreme Beings. And whatever is the seeming independence and self-acting power of men upon earth, we know that in reality they are all in the hands of God. None, strictly speaking, possess that spontaneity which entitles them to be considered as ἀρχαὶ πράξεως, or *persons*, except such as are acting under the inspiration of God, and as members of the body of Christ. All others we must regard as machines, which it is our duty to raise into personality, by communicating to them the Spirit of God; and which are worthless and punishable if they reject the communication, but which, simply as machines, can neither excite nor claim any moral affection or duty. Apart from the command of God,

however signified, neither king, parent, friend, or fellow-creature, has a well-founded title to our respect or love.

They are the property of God — his slaves in the fullest sense of the word. And as a slave has no rights, or none which are not merged in, or do not flow from, the rights of his master; so man, seen in the infinite supremacy of his Maker, can exercise no rights, and therefore claim no duties. It is very true that, regarding men as independent beings, we do love, admire, obey, and feel to them all moral affections. But deny the fact of their independence, as a Christian and a philosopher must deny it, and immediately they become mere *things*. No anger is felt towards persecutors, for they are instruments of punishment in the hands of God: no gratitude is felt for kindness as to the originator of it, but to God who has inspired it: no compassion for suffering, for the suffering is inflicted by God; and as such it must be either just or beneficial, and we do not desire to remove it: and no respect is felt for goodness; that is, even the noblest saints are not reverenced for themselves, but as inspired by the holiness of God. This language will appear very harsh and forced; and it can scarcely be realised in practice, because it is so difficult to realise the fact that men, who seem to act in entire independence, should yet be entirely the creatures, and moved by the will, of God. But just as the Stoical notion of nature, or one supreme eternal necessity regulating all the movements of the world, extinguished the affections; and as the doctrine of predestination, thoroughly carried out, hardens the heart against sympathy; and as materialism, logically developed, is always found coupled with selfishness and insensibility to moral relations — so the true doctrine of one Supreme Creator, the universal Lord of all

things, must, from the very nature of man, tend to withdraw our sympathies and interests from all subordinate beings, and to fix them exclusively upon Him. And yet, without moral relations subsisting and acknowledged between each of us and all mankind, what becomes of society or of man? And how are these relations to be maintained consistently with the exclusive sovereignty of God? I answer, first, under the system of nature, by placing all our duties to man under the sanction of a positive command from God. The most obviously natural and imperative of all human duties, that of honouring our father and mother, God nevertheless did not leave to natural instinct, but enacted it by a positive law. The clear, self-evident duties of forming true notions of God's nature, of honouring him, of observing his commandments, He did not trust to man's invention, but made them matters of positive enactment. Stealing, murder, adultery, false witness, covetousness, are all forbidden by positive laws. The instincts of our heart, and calculations of expediency, may, and do, confirm them; but, prior to all such confirmation, they are binding on us by the voice of God. So the obedience of the animal world to man, than which nothing could be thought more clear, is a positive privilege. The privilege of using for sustenance both the green herb and animal food, though reason deduces it at once, was a positive permission. We are admitted into a king's palace: reason, we suppose, might shew us the innocence of picking up a straw, or treading on a stone. But the Bible does not allow even this, or the slightest movement, without positive permission from its divine Master. Who has not been startled at the language of the patriarch, when flying from the crime of adultery? "Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all

that he hath to my hand: there is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how, then, can I do this great wickedness and sin—(against my master?—no)—against God?" (Gen. xxxix. 8.) So in Leviticus (cvi. 2): "If a man sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord—(we should expect to find enumerated under the head of such sins—blasphemy, or idolatry, or ungodliness, but it runs),—and lie unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour—(and so it proceeds, enumerating other crimes against man of the like nature, till it is added) —he shall bring his trespass-offering *unto the Lord*; ... and the priest shall make an atonement for him *before the Lord*." So David replies to the charge of Nathan, not "I have sinned against Uriah," which a modern moralist would expect; but "I have sinned against the Lord" (2 Sam. xii. 13). So Samuel: "God forbid that I should sin (not against you, but) against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you" (1 Sam. xii. 23). So in the Psalms: "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." So St. Peter (Acts v. 4) to Ananias: "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." So St. Paul (Rom. xiii. 1): "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." But I need not multiply illustrations. Even the heathen Plato would recognise the same principle of morals: for as he insists on the necessity of man's conforming to the ἰδέαι, or forms, or laws of right which exist in the world; so he considers all these as flowing from one primary

type or form in the nature of God. And from this must be derived the authority and obligation of all that are subordinate.

But, secondly, the Church establishes a new relation between ourselves and our fellow-creatures, which completely solves the problem; and reconciles all the various duties of society with the one duty to Almighty God. It describes all its members as forming one body, as being animated with one spirit; as being actually incorporated in the body of our Lord; so that we are henceforth to see Him in every true member of the Church around us. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord." "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters, as unto Christ." "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." "Submit yourselves one to another in the fear of God." "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men." "Know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord." This is the uniform language of the New Testament.

And the two cases must be clearly distinguished. Men who know nothing of Christianity, and care nothing for the Church, are very willing to transfer to human nature in general the language of love and charity, applied by the Gospel to those only who are within its pale. But our relations to the two classes of human beings are very different. Profound respect, perfect sympathy, entire renunciation of self, a perfect feeling of brotherhood, and community of interests, are our duty to members of the Church. But the Church, as the body of Christ, is the one object upon earth to engross our thoughts and affections; as the love of God is the one commandment, from which all others radiate. But to the rest of the world lying in darkness, we owe only such duties as God has imposed on us—the duties of

praying for them, laying the Gospel before them, ministering to their wants as to unhappy sufferers, regarding them with compassion and awe as children of wrath, and, if not in great peril, at least as excluded from the greatest blessings, in which we are commanded by God to offer them a share.

Observe carefully the tone and language employed by the apostles in the Book of Acts in their addresses to heathens, and in their epistles to members of the Church, and you will perceive at once this difference. The one cold, matter-of-fact, declaratory, threatening, leaving the result entirely to the hands of God; the other fervent, affectionate, zealous, full of sympathy and the closest communion. Whence this difference but that in the heathen Christ is not present—in members of the Church he is?

And it may also be observed, that the entire renunciation of self to be observed by members of the Church in their relations to each other, flows necessarily from this same fact. For renunciation of self follows necessarily on love. The moment we recognise the superiority of another being, and our unition with him by his love, we ourselves are laid at his feet, and we become a part of his property, neither allowed nor wishing to follow in any thing our own will. And thus every human being who has been made a member of Christ stands before us with the claim of Christ to our entire obedience—a claim absolutely binding on us, when that which commands in them is the Spirit of God, and that which is to obey in us is our human nature. And there is no other limit placed to our self-denial towards other members of the Church but this which follows: when the human part of their nature would overrule the divine part of ours, then indeed we are bound to resist. But we resist on the same principle on which we obey, namely, that of obedience to Christ. And

if we are perplexed to know if their wishes really flow from the Spirit of Christ, we must refer the question to the Church, and to the same criteria of spiritual things as are used in the ordinary discernment of sound doctrine, true prophesying, and holy characters.

All moral relations, then, and all moral duties, must be summed up in one — obedience to God. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole of man" (Ecclesiast. xii. 13).

CHAPTER XXIV.

WHY, then, you will ask, if you are studying ethics as a science—why am I to obey God? Why is obedience a virtue—praiseworthy—the subject of reward? and why is disobedience a vice—censurable—and punishable? And here we come to the question of the nature of moral obligation. And it branches out into several parts, according to the senses of that very ambiguous word *why*. For instance, you may ask, Why is that picture beautiful? And by the words you may wish to inquire, either why it is *beautiful to yourself*, and gives you pleasure; or why it *is really beautiful*, without reference to your own perceptions—what constitutes real beauty, as contrasted with seeming beauty; the τὸ ὄν with the τὸ φαινόμενον? So, in the inquiry into the nature of goodness, you may ask, Why does this action seem virtuous *to me*; or why is it *really* virtuous, *really* right in itself, independent of my opinion? The simple answer to the first would be, that you feel it good—you like the picture: you can no more give a further reason, than why you feel heat when the fire burns, or cold when the ice freezes you. It is an ultimate fact of consciousness, undemonstrable by any other prior principles, and what Aristotle would term a proposition cognisable by sense, ὅρος αἰσθήσεως. You may indeed analyse the picture, so as to ascertain which of the features in the complex object is the cause of the pleasure—whether it be the colouring, or subject, or grouping, or proportion; as the chemist may analyse the loaf

of bread by which a man has been poisoned, to ascertain which particular ingredient produced the death. And so in examining the nature of an action, which individually you call good, you may try to strip away from it all the adventitious circumstances, which have nothing to do with its morality, and to fix on the one point which gratifies your mind. For instance, in the act of Curtius, it is not the killing himself which constitutes the virtue, nor the leaping into a gulf, nor the leaping in with his horse, nor the place where it was done, at Rome — all these are accidents. The real moral feature in the act is his self-sacrifice for the love of his country: it is the voluntary abnegation of self, in obedience to the will of a superior Being, to whom he was bound by the ties of love and gratitude. Now it is clear, that if you did not perceive this relation to exist between the parties, you would think the action wrong. Hence the existence of this relation is one cause of your thinking it good. Your perceiving it yourself is another; for without perceiving it, you would not pronounce upon it at all. Hence, in the formation of a moral judgment (for it is a very complex process), we must presuppose, first, actual existing objects, as Clarke and Cudworth do; and, secondly, an intellectual power of discerning the relations between them. Thirdly, from seeing the relations, there springs up in the mind, as before said, an associated train of feelings, which must have been coiled up in our hearts by the hand of Nature. Here is a benefactor — there a person benefited; the latter ought to love and requite the former, and if he does not, he ought to be punished. Why? I cannot tell; but these feelings follow on the perception as invariably as a shadow on a body. But this gives us another element in the formation of our moral sentiments, namely, the voice of

God himself speaking to us through the innate sentiments of our heart, which innate sentiments are his work. They are not in themselves a part of the perception of relations; for the requital of good is a thing as distinct from the conferring of good, as pleasure is from knowledge, or sickness from eating fruit. And they are not the results of experience, for they spring up in the child before any experience; and experience would rather engender a contrary association, since gratitude is rare, and ingratitude common. Therefore, to borrow an argument of Plato,[1] if with the idea A is coupled universally another distinct idea B, and we have no internal mode of accounting for their combination, we must attribute it to an external agent, and hence to God. These are therefore innate moral sentiments, given us by God.

But we have not yet reached a full view of the process of their formation. Having seen the relation between Curtius and his country, and instinctively associated with it the idea of gratitude and devotion, we expect that he should act in the way which these affections would suggest. And here comes in the doctrine of sympathy in the formation of moral sentiments, on which Adam Smith has enlarged. For the degree of our expectation that another person under certain circumstances will do this or that, will depend on our own disposition to do it. If you would do it yourself unhesitatingly, and without any sense of temptation in an opposite direction, you will feel little wonder or admiration when another person does it also. You will say, It is very right, very proper—it would have been very wrong if he had acted otherwise; but there is no great merit in acting thus. And hence the import-

[1] Phædo.

ant practical result, that good men will have least sense of merit, and be most shocked at sin. "When they have done all that is commanded, they will say that they are unprofitable servants." And their desire of retribution on the wicked, and their remorse at their own sins, will be most keen when they themselves are most holy. The consideration might be applied, perhaps, to anticipate the state of our moral feelings in another world, especially at the last judgment.

There is a second case, in which a man would himself, under similar circumstances, act wrong, and without any conscientious resistance in his own mind. And such a man, in estimating the same wrong act in another, would say only that it was what he expected. He would see no harm in it; but neither would he see any good. He would never love or admire the agent. And hence there could be no sympathy between them, and no bond of communion. No bad man praises a bad action, though he does not condemn it. And why is this?

We shall see by taking a third case, when a man does a bad act, with many struggles of conscience, with desires to do better, when he has not lost good principles, but is incapable from weakness of following them out. Such a man will be able to appreciate the power and self-denial exhibited by the party who does what he cannot do himself. He will have within his intellect a right standard, and will approve the act which is conformed to it. He will measure the superiority of the agent by his own weakness. Humility, a knowledge of truth, a sense of the real excellence of virtue, and an instinctive attachment to and respect for a virtuous character, will accompany this state of mind, notwithstanding its imbecility of purpose. And in this state only will be found a keen, strong expression of moral approba-

tion—a sense of moral beauty, or τὸ καλόν, as of something rare, elevated, superhuman, commanding our reverence and wonder. For goodness and beauty, like greatness, are always ideas of relation, implying a comparison between something less good or less beautiful. A savage who knew nothing of machinery, and had never attempted to make any, would not wonder at a steam-engine. The only man who could thoroughly appreciate an act of self-denial would be a person susceptible of strong passions, who had himself struggled against them, and had himself failed. And thus it is, that with a sense of moral beauty and reverence for the person in whose character it is found—in other words, with the principle of faith—there is always connected much that is good,—germs at least of goodness, efforts for right conduct, though hitherto unsuccessful—a knowledge of the right road, though as yet there is no strength to follow it. This remark might also be extended to many features in the Christian dispensation.

In the formation, then, of our moral sentiments there are many agents at work,—perception, intellect, instinct; God, the Creator of instinct; rectitude of intention; imperfect efforts to do right; taste, or a natural admiration of that which surpasses our own conceptions; judgment, or the faculty which compares a particular action with a general standard; and, last, that which in practice must come first, the teaching of others to point out true relations as they really exist, and the duties which flow from them. And one class of duties obvious and intelligible to all must be employed at first to enforce our fulfilling these other duties, whether we appreciate them or not. For instance, to understand the real tenure of property, and our obligation to be generous; or the real spiritual dignity of a member of the Church, and the degradation of sen-

sual gratification; or the relations between language and the mind, and between the speaker and God who hears him, on which relations may depend the obligation of truth, as on our perception of them depends our sense of the obligation,—to understand these requires much knowledge, profound inquiry, and continued habits of virtue, which neither a child nor a young man, and not even an old man until after a long discipline, can possess. But the merest child can see and feel the superiority of his parent to himself. He has only to look to his own limbs, to hear the voice of his parent, to meet his eyes, to feel his hand, to witness his acts,—and he recognises his own inferiority; and with this recognition comes the duty of obedience. And so easy and natural is the conviction of the existence of Infinite Power above us, and beyond any thing that we can discern with our senses, as the unseen cause of seen effects, that no moral relation can be stated more intelligibly, or brought home even to the weakest intellect at a very early age, than the being of a God, and the consequent duties of obedience to Him. And when obedience to man, as to the appointed minister of God, is made identical with obedience to God himself, as it is in all right statements of parental, and civil, and ecclesiastical authority, the whole of man's moral duties are brought round to this one simple relation. Virtue is made intelligible to the poorest capacity. All curious speculations are superseded; and morality is summed up in the one simple commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy strength, and Him only shalt thou serve."

This, then, seems the answer to the question, Why does a virtuous action appear good to me?—meaning by it, Why do I like it? And the explanation here given of the origin of our moral senti-

ments, seems to have this advantage of other theories concerning it, that it comprises them all.

But the question may mean, What is the *external* cause which thus affects me? as when I ask, What is the external quality in the fire which causes in me the internal sensation of heat? And to this the answer is, what has been so often stated before: it is the property in the action which produces in my mind the perception of unity in plurality. I am not afraid to state the definition in this most abstract form, trusting to the reader to apply what has been said before on the subject. Every thing to which the term good is applied, will be found, on examination, to have this property. When I anticipate a note in music, but anticipate it with some little suspense, with a certain degree of doubt and hesitation, which implies *plurality*, and then the note comes as expected, and fills up, satisfies, gives unity to the train of my ideas, leaving nothing wanting—then I call the music good. When you are thirsting for water, and are debarred from it for a time, so that your mind is distracted as it were between the ideas of drinking and the consciousness of thirst, and then the water is presented to you, and it satisfies the thirst, and removes the distraction of the want, you call it good. But if you anticipate something sweet, and it proves acid, it is immediately called bad. Salt, which with meat is good, in wine becomes bad. Why? because instead of satisfying, it disappoints our expectation, and produces plurality in unity, instead of unity in plurality. And so in morals. Whenever in observing the *relations of one person to another*, you wish, desire, anticipate, but with misgiving, with difficulty in realising the fact, doubt, and uncertainty, whether or no he will act in a certain way, and then, after such misgiving, he is found to act in this way, then it is called good. But

without the previous consciousness of plurality, when the mind is disturbed, distracted, in want, in fear, in a balance of desires, so that there are before it two different trains of thought not reconcilable with each other—without this there is no consciousness of unity being given to it, and hence no notion of good. It is sweet, says the poet, to see the sea raging when you are on the shore, to fill yourself with the alarm of danger, and then recognise that you are in security. It is delightful to be perplexed with intellectual difficulties, when a solution is at hand to reduce a variety of discrepancies under one acknowledged principle. The friend who saves us from a calamity is indeed good; but an enemy who does the same is better. And the greater the calamity, the better we think him. A soldier who stands his ground against a common charge excites no admiration; but the leader of a forlorn hope is called a hero. So, in the eyes of a temperate man, a temperate man is scarcely virtuous; but to the slave of his passions, who yet is longing to escape from them, the least self-denial is regarded as an act of martyrdom. The property, then, which gives unity to plurality, is the real external quality in an act to which we apply the term good. When an action is conformed to a rule acknowledged within us; when we ourselves were inclined to anticipate a discrepancy — then we call it right. It is virtuous. And the opposite quality of reducing unity to plurality, that is, of unsettling, disturbing, and perplexing the mind, we call evil.

And thus God seems good only to those who feel their own deficiencies, and see how they are supplied by God. And he is good in two ways; first as supplying our own personal wants, and then as exhibiting in himself a perfect image of all that is excellent, to an eye which looks around the earth

for something to satisfy its conceptions, and looks in vain.

But there is still another meaning of the question, Why does a virtuous act please me? It may imply the final cause. Why has nature, or rather God, so formed me, that I do take pleasure in certain acts, and approve them, and disapprove others? And the first answer to this is, that so God has willed it. And thus the mere will of God is made the foundation of morality. But another question may still be asked beyond this, Why is it the will of God? And if this were followed up, it would bring us into one of the most abstruse inquiries in ethics. For some bad philosophers, in their mistaken anxiety to assert the omnipotence of God, have attempted to describe as purely arbitrary this his act, by which he has given to his moral creatures a taste for one class of actions, and a distaste for another. They say that God might have created a world, in which, by an alteration in the constitution of our mind and of external nature, murder, theft, adultery, falsehood, would have been thought virtues, not vices; just as a world might be imagined where the law of gravitation may be suspended, where fire may freeze, and cold burn, bread be poison, and arsenic nourishment; where the sun may generate darkness, and the winds only smooth the sea. All the consequences of this absurd theory it is unnecessary to repeat. And to enter into such a discussion of it as would trespass on the deep mysteries of the Divine nature, would be profanation. It is enough that our very *notion of will implies an object to which it is directed.* But this object cannot be any thing out of the Divine nature, for He is before all things, and above all things. It must therefore be an attribute of His own. His own eternal nature is the law of His will. And thus there is a

basis for morality beyond mere arbitrary will; and that basis is laid in a creed—a metaphysical creed, if so you choose to call it, of the Divine attributes. And if the definition of good above given is correct, namely, that it is the reducing of plurality to unity, it accords wonderfully with the fundamental truth of catholic doctrinal theology.

And one more question may be asked, How am I to distinguish between real good and apparent good —τὸ ὄν and τὸ φαινόμενον? Many things which are vicious and mischievous seem good to you. Abundance of wealth to the avaricious, indolence to the weary, luxury to the effeminate, drink to the thirsty, food to the hungry; which yet afterwards are said to be bad. Is it one and the self-same quality which pleases you in vicious acts of which you afterwards repent, and in good acts of which you never repent? I answer, yes. In every case whatever, that which you call good is that which promises at least to give unity, peace, and order to a harassed, distracted, perplexed mind. It becomes bad when it does not fulfil its promise; when the thirst, instead of being allayed by the draught, is increased; when the more wealth you acquire, the more you want; when dishonesty, instead of placing you in security and repose, exposes you to shame and misery, and the loss of God's favour; when the giving the reins up to a morbid fancy, only exposes you to subsequent mortification, and what seemed apples in your grasp turn to bitter ashes. That a vast number of objects and acts, which seem to possess unity in plurality, are of this deceitful nature is obvious. And it results, as we have before seen, from the fact that the mind itself is perpetually changing.

Now it is evident, that for the same medicine to work the same cure, the patient must be in the same condition; for fire to produce the same sensa-

tion of warmth, the body must always be at the same temperature. The same rain dripping on mould and on marble will produce very different effects. And the same object presented to different minds, or to the same minds in different states, will appear now more and now less good, now good and now even evil. But the human mind is perpetually shifting. Its ideas, feelings, habits, appetites, vary every hour. The senses pour in on it every minute a succession of varying objects. The body is continually soliciting it with new stimulants. Its train of associated ideas spring up and dance, like motes in the sunbeam, into innumerable new combinations. Its energies become exhausted; its appetites palled; its impulses die away or revive. And with every new change, the same object, unaltered intrinsically as it is, appears to it in a new light. What satisfied before, now disgusts us; what pleased, pains; what wearied, excites; what accorded is now discrepant; what was intelligible is now obscure. And from these changes arise our doubts as to the reality of moral good; just as from the seeming deceptions of the senses arise the doubts of the reality of an external material world.

As this sense of unreality, then, arises solely from the changes in the mind; as there is no variation in the object itself, but in every object, vicious as well as virtuous, that which is pursued and approved promises the same effect, namely, the reducing plurality to unity, our whole business is to inquire, whether there is any state of mind so fixed and stable, that it will always reflect the same object in precisely the same form. How is the mind to acquire this uniform tone and character, the τὸ μόνιμον of Aristotle—that which was the great end and aim of the Greek, and indeed of all other philosophy? A man whose head is reeling, thinks that

the light dances before his eyes. A drunkard feels the earth moving beneath him. A child in a carriage says that the trees fly past him. And so the sceptical moralist says, that the colours of good and bad are shifting, and the distinctions of right and wrong perpetually confusing each other; because, while they remain fixed, the same mind which perceives them is varying. And that mind must be fixed. When fixed, then ask if the same object appears in the same light—if the same answer is always given to the question, What is good, and what evil? And there is but one way of fixing it—by cutting off from it all those ideas which are mere fancies, and have no foundation in external realities, and which therefore, when we bring them into contact with external realities, must disappear, and deceive us—as the false inference drawn from the glittering of the mirage disappoints the traveller, when he comes to the spot and finds sand instead of water; and as a hypothetical and falsely assumed relation between two parties must engender in us a moral judgment on their actions, which will be overturned when the true relation is discovered. The time will come, say modern historians, and say truly, when, comparatively, we shall venerate the character of queen Mary, and contemn that of Elizabeth. They were what they were, each of them, independently of our fancies. That such a change will take place, does not imply that our moral sentiments will change, but that we shall know more of their real character. And inasmuch as to discover and comprehend all the true relations of things is difficult, and to a poor ignorant man, beset by his passions and blinded by self-will, is hard, nay, rather impossible, we must learn them from another source—from a Being who is neither beset by passions nor blinded by self-will, and who discerns all things as

they really are. Thus, if a distempered eye would know the real nature of colours, he must refer to one whose vision is sound. And when men dispute, and differ in their judgment of an action, we must be guided by One whose mind is, we know, unalterable, and never has changed, and never will change. Hence Aristotle makes the wise man, or the φρόνιμος, the standard of truth, the criterion of real and apparent good. But the φρόνιμος is only a man; his nature, in its highest perfection, is neither immortal nor immutable. And we must go still farther: we must have recourse to God himself. He who never changes, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow; whose own essential attributes determine his will, whose will created all things, and whose eye discerns all things — He alone can tell us what is really good and really evil. And his commands alone can form a stable, unshaken foundation for our moral belief. And by revelation, through the Catholic Church, we possess these commands; and by no other channel, which is not tainted, and rendered suspicious and variable by a mixture of human opinions. Draw your notions of God's commands from your reason, and your reason may logically err; from your conscience, and your conscience is too often the voice of your own corrupt desires; from calculations of expediency, and how can you sum up the items? from human laws, and as human they are fallible; from general sentiments, and they also are human, and the majority of men are not wise and good, but ignorant and bad; from the declarations of a self-chosen teacher, as in popery, but your choice will be as erroneous as your own moral character is defective; from the Bible, but the interpretation of the Bible, if left to your own inferences, will be tinged with your own inclinations, perplexed with your own ignorance, misled by your

own false judgments. One more criterion remains — the real clear voice of God, attested by his appointed ministers, and preserved, not only in the written word, but in the traditionary creeds, rituals, and history of the Catholic Church. And thus in morals, as in theology, Catholicity is the criterion of truth, and the first teacher to which we must have recourse.

This, then, is the Christian definition of virtue. That it is a state of the heart and mind appointed by God to follow on certain relations between moral persons; and we must learn both the relations and the duties consequent on them from the witness appointed by God to his revealed will. And it would follow on this, to examine more distinctly the nature of these witnesses, and the mode in which they convey to us the knowledge of God's laws. They are, as was stated before, the parent, the king, and the Church. But to explain the various dependencies of these three parties, and the mode in which they form a perfect system of counteracting influences, so as to preserve their general testimony uncorrupted, and their joint power unweakened, is the proper subject of a peculiar branch of Ethics, the science of Politics. A work on Christian Politics is a necessary appendage to a work on Christian Ethics; and must be reserved for a separate occasion. It will be sufficient for the practical application of the principles at which we have arrived, to suggest the following consideration. Let a man who really wishes to do right, without entering into any profound analysis of ethical principles or cases of casuistry, resolve in all things whatever to place himself under the control of his parents, as representatives of God; submitting to them even in the slightest point, giving up even to their caprices, abandoning all personal considerations in all things,

except where a contrary law from a superior minister of God, say from the state, comes in to prohibit him. In the same manner let him look to the state as another representative of God; and acknowledge its laws in all points, as barriers within which to restrain his inclinations and actions, because the powers that be are ordained of God, never refusing to comply except where the express authority of the Church, confirmed as the word of God, prohibits him. Let him, in the same manner, keep his belief, his feelings, and acts of piety—his religious observances, whether ceremonial or spiritual, within the ordinances and injunctions of his Church. Let him receive them all from the existing communion to which he is attached, never questioning or wishing to alter them, or abandoning his present position, until the ancient Catholic Church, as the universally accredited witness of God's truth, comes in with some prohibition. Let him, in fact, form himself as the molten metal would try, if it had reason, to form itself into a perfect statue, keeping and observing the limits of the mould, as so many bounds, short of which it could not come, and beyond which it could not pass without destroying the perfection of the figure. Within this let nature take its course. Follow the bias of the heart. Enjoy innocent recreations; reason, study, act, as natural instinct, or rather, in a baptised member of the Church, as the Spirit of God suggests, without fear or doubt; only with this caution, not to violate the lines prescribed by Almighty God, whose will you are to obey in all things. Would such a man possess all the elements of goodness? Would he be an object for our highest moral admiration? Would he shew self-command, self-denial, prudence, love, natural affection, wisdom, courage, temperance, liberality, and every other virtue? Would he be likely

to err in his calculation of right and wrong? or even if he did err, would he not be indemnified by his desire to do right, and the care with which he adhered to the prescriptions of his authorised rulers? Would he not be a good son, a good citizen, a good churchman; a good man in every relation of life, whether to his fellow-creatures or to his God? Would any thing be wanting to exhibit in him perfect human virtue?

This, then, is the theory of moral duty, in conformity with which the Church demands a promise from her members at baptism, "that they will keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of their life." [1]

Study the 119th Psalm with these principles in view; and from thence proceed to the Prophets and the Epistles, and the words of our Lord himself, and you will perceive at once if the theory is scriptural and divine.

One more remark on this head. Aristotle has before this distinguished two faculties in the moral activity of man; one, by which he simply acts in the sense of making a choice, resisting temptation, conforming his *will* to external laws; the other, by which he *makes*, or *produces works*, ἔργα. Both of these will fall under the same conditions imposed on us by the Church, of keeping God's commands in all things. Art, τέχνη, is as much subjected to a moral control and responsibility as our more obviously practical principles, φρόνησις. And the vast influence which a corrupted taste exercises not only on the young and ignorant, but on mankind at large, requires that it should be treated, as both Aristotle and Plato have treated it, as a constituent part of ethical science. Poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, manufactures, music, rhe-

[1] Catechism.

toric, with all the other productions of the creative faculty in man, either directly or indirectly—by the ideas which they convey, or the analogy of feeling which they excite—do mould and fashion the mind before which they are brought; and the more powerfully, in proportion as that mind is weak and ignorant. And in the present day this consideration has been overlooked, until modern art has degenerated into a cold, shallow, fantastic show, pandering only to the gratification of the senses; or, what is still more frequent, embodying and circulating the most noxious principles.

The importance and extent of this subject will justify its being examined in a separate work, which, if time and opportunity are granted, I shall hope to undertake. An inquiry into the principles of Christian Art is as necessary an appendage to a treatise on Christian Ethics as an examination of the principles of Christian Politics.

CHAPTER XXV.

We are now drawing to a close of this inquiry. We have seen what is the nature of the conditions imposed upon man in the covenant of baptism, and which it is his part to fulfil. And now comes the question, What has God promised to fulfil on his part?

And, first, it is to be observed, that what God gives is given mainly at once. The highest privileges of the Church, the being made "members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven"—the participation in the Holy Spirit, all are communicated in baptism. But still there is something wanting. *They may be lost, and are lost often.* And the promise of God is, that if we do our part in the covenant, He will so confer them on us, and so incorporate them with our souls, that no power shall be able to snatch them from us—"that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. viii. 38). Aristotle represents the virtuous life of man in much the same light. The very child must be taught the perfect law of goodness from his teacher; he must possess the principle of obedience in perfection,—for it cannot exist imperfectly; he must do what is right, otherwise he never can acquire the habit, ἕξις. Now the struggle of his life is to acquire *this habit;* to

confirm and strengthen himself in all goodness; to consolidate his principles; to make sure his knowledge. Without stability and firmness, *τὸ μόνιμον*, man's excellence is a dream that passes away. It is worthless.

Now, it is evident that according as the Christian life is considered as the gradual acquisition of new blessings, or as only the stronger retention and development of blessings already possessed, the moral struggle which it involves will take an entirely different character. And, practically, this is the case in the present day. Baptised Christians yet speak of their efforts to do right, as if they were endeavouring to obtain the gift of the Holy Spirit for the first time, instead of clinging to it as a treasure already within them. They study Christian truth as if it was all new, and they had not already been taught their creed. They think it necessary to look out for a religious community with which to live, as if they had not already been placed in one at baptism. They propose to secure to themselves the love of God and the favour of Christ, as if it had not been imparted to them while they were lying in the cradle. And they ask for a sign of this love in some violent emotion, or miraculous interference, totally disdaining the sign already given to them in the water of the font.

Now, it is evident that such a mistake must introduce into all our moral acts the most startling confusion and contradictions. It must misdirect our energies, distort our prayers, misinterpret the subsequent dealings of God, involve us in inextricable perplexities as to the acts of the Church. And such has been the case. It cannot be shewn more clearly than in the altered view now taken of the two solemn rites with which the ancient Church concluded the ceremony of baptism.

"Immediately," says Bingham,[1] "after the persons came up out of the water, if the bishop was present at the solemnity, they were presented to him, in order to receive his benediction; which was a solemn prayer for the descent of the Holy Ghost upon such as were baptised. And to this prayer there was usually joined the ceremony of a second unction, and imposition of hands, and the sign of the cross." It was the rite of confirmation. And upon this followed another practice, which with our defective views of baptism, and of sacraments in general, will appear almost unintelligible—the administration of the Holy Eucharist even to infants. This, remember, was not a modern innovation. In the words of Bingham,[2] "It was that known practice and custom in the ancient Church, of giving the Eucharist to infants, which continued in the Church for several ages. It is frequently mentioned in Cyprian, Austin, Innocentius, and Gennadius, writers from the third to the fifth century. Maldonatus confesses it was in the Church for six hundred years; and some of the authorities just now alleged, prove it to have continued two or three ages more, and to have been the common practice beyond the time of Charles the Great."

Here, then, we have distinctly declared the precise nature of the gifts which God promises, and of the habit of mind with which we are to prepare ourselves to receive them. It was the gift of the Holy Spirit in greater measure — its deep and complete incorporation in our natural soul, so as to become one with us and we with it. It is not external advantages, freedom from pain, sensible delight, knowledge regarded as an end, honour, virtue, happiness, any thing either of selfish enjoyment or abstract

[1] Book xii. c. 1. [2] Book xii. c. 1. s. iii.

good; but a more complete and ensured possession of God himself. God is our good, the one object to fix our eye, the end to have always before us. In Him are summed up and included all other goods, which are but shadows and emanations of his perfection. And He is our life, and life is our good. And our animal life is like our spiritual life. Each is implanted in us by God; one at our birth, the other at our baptism. Each is unseen; each communicated to us through man; each hung dependent on a frail external machinery, requiring on our parts the most anxious care, and on the part of God and his ministers the most watchful providence to preserve it for a day; each is liable to be lost; each capable of suspension, and capable of revival, by the care of others, but when once wholly gone, each beyond recovery; and each requires nutriment and daily bread—the infant as well as the man. And while we live in our cradles, God provides for us fleshly and spiritual parents, who do not suffer us to perish, because we cannot provide it for ourselves, but prepare and administer it to us before we know any thing of its value or its necessity. And as our strength grows up, both parents alike—the parents of our souls as of our bodies—teach us to stretch out our hands, and utter prayers, and in some measure to provide it for ourselves by our own exertions, because he that will not work must starve. And the nourishment of both is a sacrament. There is in each an outward sign and an inward power. It is not the outward bread, which we see and touch, that nourishes the body, but some secret impalpable mysterious substance, we know not what, buried and hidden in the outward substance, we know not how; or it may be only some secret power, which acts conjointly with it on the frame of man. But no chemist has ever yet extracted it, or placed it before

the eye in the shape of pure and abstract nutriment. And those who know the nature of human life, know that if such nutriment in such a shape could be exhibited, it would cease to be nutriment. It would not support life. For it cannot act upon the body without being combined with innutritious matter as with a "caput mortuum," an outward sign. And to nourish us, it must be absorbed into the body and incorporated with our pre-existent vitality. And how it is thus incorporated, no eye can tell. The process is carried on within us by the hand of God, not by the hand of man — a secret wonderful process, which pervades inanimate matter with animating spirit, and secretes from one single fluid, tasteless, colourless, and, to human sense, without power or quality, all the various powers and qualities of the human body, carrying on, in its secret recesses, a wonderful manufactory of all kinds; so that the utmost luxury of man can scarcely imagine a machine, or an operation of chemistry, or a structure of art, which Nature, unseen by us, is not realising every day in the organic development of every animated frame. Look at that infant sucking at its mother's breast; and then collect from the streets of London all your great artificers and mechanics, painters and sculptors, architects and engineers; and he will surpass them all. He is performing at this moment every one of their operations, with a dexterity, and accuracy, and perfection, which baffles even the conception of the highest intellects. He is building himself a house, in which his soul is to reside; a house, not fixed to one spot, but capable of moving about to any place, and adapting itself to every climate. He not only fits together the masonry of his bones, but he makes the masonry itself; a hard, solid, but light, concrete of artificial stone. He spins cordage, to thatch his head. He

weaves a most delicate tissue for his skin, at once impervious to wet from without, and pervious to it from within: no manufacturer has yet been able to solve this necessary problem. He constructs a telescope to see with; an ear-trumpet to hear with; a carriage to ride on; a pantechnicon of mechanical instruments in the hand; a self-repairing mill in his teeth; a most curious system of water-works, pipes, pumps, fountains, and drains, by which he distributes the blood to every part of his mansion, on the most correct principles of hydraulics. He will make an air-pump to ventilate it in his reservoir of the lungs; a vast kitchen filled with stoves, ovens, bake-houses, to concoct his food, besides larders and presses to receive it. He will defy any chemist to equal the menstruum which he invents and employs for the purpose of analysing and recombining it. At the same time that helpless infant is creating a series of engines of all kinds for raising weights, pulling cords, propelling bodies; branching out into innumerable springs, pulleys, levers, wheels, and valves, all worked, like Mr. Brunel's block-machinery, by one motive power, *which no one can see.* He is constructing drains and cloacæ to carry off all that is superfluous or noxious. He is ready, if he breaks a bone, instantly to set to work and make a new concrete, or marmoratum, to consolidate it again. And he is also moulding a statue; hiding all this machinery under an exquisite figure of grace, beauty, and proportion, which it is the highest aim of modern art to study and repeat. He will paint himself with the delicacy of a Raphael, and the richness of a Titian. He will touch every line of his face with a minute and exquisite feeling, so that his mind may be seen through it as through a transparent veil. He will construct a whole language of signs, in the telegraphic play of the muscles, and the flexibility

of the features, with which he will speak to his fellow-men with a most perspicuous, and moving, and intelligible eloquence. And he will fit up in his throat an orchestra of musical instruments, capable of awakening every pulse of sound, full of life, expression, and feeling, without which all other instruments are cold and insipid. And when all this has been done, he will transmit to others the same wonderful art, the same mysterious powers, and multiply and preserve them through an infinite series of generations. All this he begins to do the moment the breath of life is infused into him. But without something else he cannot continue it—without food, his power departs, the spark becomes extinct, the manufactory drops to ruin: and unseen, unexplained, uncomprehended, he takes from the hand of those whom God has set to guard him, the mysterious symbols and vehicles in which the vital sustenance is embodied. He incorporates these with him in faith—he trusts the internal process, of which he can know nothing, to a hand of which he knows nothing, but which does work within it all those great ends and operations, by which his innumerable functions, the microcosm of the universe of his material frame, the church of his body, "with many members and one spirit," is supported and developed.

Who will dare to say that there is anything strange or incongruous in that theory of our spiritual life which the Church pronounced, when immediately the germ of life had been imparted, she administered new sustenance and food to it through the outward emblems of bread and wine?—that theory, which the Catholic Church at this day retains, though with a dimmer apprehension and fainter belief, but which a modern ignorance has rejected. And what has it substituted instead?—a specula-

tion of spiritual vitality, nutrition, and growth, which believes life can be attained by self-agency, without being infused from without; and can be preserved by exercise, and hunger,—by doing good works, and creating aspirations of desire,—without any fresh support analogous to the reception of food. I do not dare to enter farther into this solemn and mysterious subject. But as before it was said that the foundation of Christian Ethics must be laid in the sacrament of Baptism and the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, so let it now be asserted, that the whole superstructure rests on the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and the real, spiritual, personal presence and communication of the blessed body of our Lord to those who rightly partake in it. Until once more the Catholic Church in this country shall restore this awful mystery to its due prominence—until it makes prayer, and praise, and even right action, subservient to the reception of the Holy Communion, Christian Ethics will still remain a vague, inconsistent, fluctuating chaos of contradictory principles and empty feelings. Men will continue to forget, as they have forgotten, that their real goodness is the goodness of Almighty God dwelling within them; that their only life is his life; that their true happiness is union with him; that their virtue is in his virtue, and their power in his power; and that in obtaining this they have little share, but the absence and overcoming of resistance. They do not choose it, before it is given to them in baptism. They cannot afterwards procure it for themselves, without the ministration of the Church. When given, they cannot by themselves turn it to any account: they know nothing of the mode in which it works. It is all a mystery. And they can do nothing but submit themselves passively and obediently to the supernatural Hand. Think what a

mighty difference lies between this moral frame of mind, and the eager, grasping, restless spirit, which imagines all things are to be done by itself, are within its own reach, depend on its own superintendence. What is the virtue of a diseased patient, who requires a surgical operation? It is to lie still, and do nothing; to submit himself meekly, patiently, and unresistingly to another hand. Let him resist, or struggle, or grasp the knife himself, even with the best intention of aiding the operator, and the operation is marred. And so it is with man. If man does not struggle, God will do every thing. Check impatience, endure pain, overrule the tendency to move. Have faith in Him who is operating, and all will be right. *Energy, and free agency, and spontaneous power, you must have.* Let it be directed in this way, not in striving to do for yourself what God only can do for you.

And also it must be directed *to prayer.* As the creed was given to the baptised person before he was baptised, so the first words to be uttered afterwards were also taught him in the Lord's Prayer. Think what prayer is, and then you will understand its importance in a system of Ethics. The heathen knew little of it; he could utter his own wants, give vent to an occasional burst of feeling, endeavour, as the Indian, to honour his gods with an almost inarticulate jargon of mysterious sounds; and even this was no inconsiderable part of human virtue. But any thing like Christian prayer, seen in its full meaning, was beyond his reach. Aristotle knew nothing of it. Plato says much of religion, speaks eloquently on the duty of praise; but says, and can say, little of prayer. But look to the early Church, and you will see that nearly its whole life and being consisted of prayer. Morning and evening, day and night, uprising and down-sitting, going out and coming in—

still there was prayer. Now we can understand easily the connexion between prayer and the supply of our wants. For it is not possible to see another person possessing what we desire, and able to bestow it on us, without our minds throwing themselves spontaneously into the attitude of supplication. All the sophistry of metaphysics cannot prevent this, until there comes some positive inexorable declaration, that he of whom we ask will neither give nor listen. And then we sink into despair. But no such declaration has come from God. All that he tells us of prayer—tells us by the expectation of our hearts, by our own secret sympathies with misery, by the experience of our fellow-men, by the prophecies of our hopes and our fears, and by his express revelations through the Church—all insist on prayer.

And the very fact, on which the metaphysical speculation is built, that prayer is useless, because God is unchangeable, is false. God is not unchangeable, as these idle dreamers say. He changes with every change in the relations in which he stands to man, himself continuing unmoveable. So the sun remains fixed in the centre of his system; but with every motion of each planet, as one approaches and another recedes,—as one turns around it swiftly, another slowly,—as one brings before it seas and mountains, and another forests and plains,—the sun also varies with it, here diffusing more heat, and there less; now shining in the noonday, now buried in midnight; now rising up to the meridian, and now sinking into the shadows of evening; now hid with clouds, now dazzling with its brightness; now diffusing life, and health, and fruitfulness, and now a famine or a plague. And yet it is still the same. Its sameness consists not in the identity of its operations independent of a change in the subject which it affects, but in the very variableness of

its operations corresponding with the variations of the subject:—so God is fixed, man changes; and with every change of man, God changes likewise, according to his own immutable, undeviating, eternal laws. And one eternal law and condition for the communication of his love and blessing is, that the heart of the creature be humble, earnest, bent upward stedfastly and ardently, not trusting to itself, but to its Maker, asking all things of Him, seeing all things in Him and Him in all things, longing for the continuance of his love, being always in the attitude of prayer. So it is with men. Where there is no want, there is no gift. Where there is want and prayer, even the common morals of the world make it the greatest of their sins—hard-heartedness and cruelty—to refuse.

But, then, think how all the precepts and principles of Ethics are summed up in this one practice of prayer. If all our moral duties and moral relations, as well as our physical existence, depend on the one relation between man and God, prayer—perpetual and universal prayer—is the only form in which such a relation can be acknowledged. If a sound intellectual belief is the basis of all goodness, see how the Church, in framing her prayers, and providing fixed forms for our devotions, has carefully interwoven with them her creeds and articles, so that even if these were lost, we might still learn what we should believe in our minds, from the desires which we are taught to cherish in our hearts. If the right direction and mastery over our thoughts is the chief and first exertion of human virtue, where can we learn this better than by being called day after day, "at morning, and evening, and noonday," into a holy place, amid solemn sights, away from the vanities of the world, and in the midst of graves and memorials of death, and there made to

kneel down, as in the presence of God, and to fashion our wandering thoughts into conformity with the commands of his ministers?

Enforce this duty at fixed times, and you compel a habit of self-denial; you create by practice a power of breaking off any action or contemplation in which we are engaged, the moment a positive command comes across to summon us away. Here is the whole duty of obedience. You substitute for the vain, feeble, inordinate desires of man, desires which can never deceive and never change, because they are sanctioned by God. You engrave deeper and deeper by repeated strokes, and burn into the mind indelibly, the great truths on which all its virtue and happiness depend, not only by repeating them in the ear, but by forcing the lips to repeat, and the gestures to acknowledge them, and the mind itself to take them in while it is withdrawn from other sights, and softened by the solemnities of places, by the quietude of holy buildings, by the awfulness of holy rites, and the sympathy of holy men. And this act, which is duty at first, as all virtue must be at the beginning, becomes happiness in the end, its own reward. For if happiness is union with God, prayer is the enjoyment of that union. It is the proof of its continuance, even the evidence of its existence; for who can pray without the Spirit of God within him? It consolidates and perpetuates it. It is the form in which are essentially comprised the two elements on which the enjoyment of that union depends; namely, consciousness of our own infinite weakness, and faith in God's infinite power and infinite love. And when prayer is made in common, as it is required to be; directly, as when we meet in the congregation; indirectly, even when we pray in our closet, and with only our hearts and not our bodies joined in the Church, here

also are contained the great social principles of human communion, on which all individual virtues ultimately depend. As individuals, we are nothing; and only as members of the Church are privileged to have access to God; just as it is only as members of civil and domestic society that we can attain our natural perfection. And lastly, when this prayer takes, as it must take mainly, the form of intercession—for kings, and magistrates, and all who are in authority, for our brethren in distant lands, for all "who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity," for infants, and widows, and the traveller, and the captive—thinking not only of ourselves, and those who are to come, but even of the dead,—blessing God for their departure in Christ, and looking forward to reunion with them in heaven—consider if here is not contained an epitome of our whole duty to man in all our earthly relations—loyalty, patriotism, general benevolence, sympathy, mercy, the love of parents, the respect of society, the hopefulness of an eye looking forward to the blessings of future generations, the common love and sympathy which looks behind and beyond the grave, and binds together all successive ages in one grand scheme of human affection and co-operation. Could it be taught more effectually, practised more correctly, enforced more earnestly and more safely, than by prayer that God himself would do for them all that we are bound to do for them ourselves? And thus, as all human virtue and human happiness depend on two things,—one external, the other internal, the aid of others, and exertions of our own,—so in the sacrament of baptism, the ministration of the rite represents what is done for us by God through his Church; and the bringing our children to it, or the coming to it ourselves as adults, represents what is due from our-

selves, in order to place ourselves within the pale of the Church, and to become possessed of its privileges. Omit either part, and the whole effect is lost. And when these privileges are once acquired, and we ask how they are still to be secured and retained, again the same two things are needful; and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper represents what is done for us by God, and prayer what is due from ourselves. Omit either, and the effect is lost. Apply them both, and all righteousness and holiness will follow of course.

Neither must it be forgotten, that besides and previous to the solemn rite of the Lord's Supper, there was another ceremony practised by the ancient Church, immediately after Baptism—the rite of Confirmation. Much of its significancy depends on this close connexion with baptism. For when thus practised, it could not be considered, as too many consider it now, simply as an opportunity of renewing vows made at baptism, and of taking formally upon ourselves obligations previously incurred for us by others. It appears to contain in it the type and germ of *the social principles of the Church.* Baptism brings us as individuals into union with Christ; but something else is wanted to express that union with Christ can only be obtained by union with his body, the Church. To enter into this question here, would be to anticipate a discussion which properly belongs to a distinct branch of Christian Ethics—Christian Politics. I will only suggest three questions. Why, when the principle of spiritual life had been imparted to the infant at baptism—why renew and confirm it, and increase it, by another ceremony? Why confine the administration of this ceremony to the bishop only, and not entrust it to inferior officers? And why express its internal efficacy by the imposition of

hands? Surely it was to imply that, besides Almighty God, the source of all wisdom and power, there is upon earth a delegated power in the person of his Church; that to this delegated minister we owe, under God, not only the beginning of the moral and spiritual blessings of Christianity, but their continuance and confirmation—that the prayers of the Church, as a body, are the great means of bringing down the favour of God not only upon the earth at large, but on the individual members of the Church—that she stands to those members as a parent to a child, blessing them with the same form and sign with which parents bless their children. And even this form itself, simple and obvious as it may seem, is full of meaning to one, who recognises in the human body the expansion and expression of the mind, and knows that every faculty and feeling within, has its corresponding organ and lineament without. It is by the hands that we receive from others—that we hold fast for ourselves—that we impart to others whatever we possess. And thus the Church stands upon earth daily deriving her spirit from God, cherishing and preserving it against the assaults of enemies, transmitting it to future generations, and diffusing it over the earth. The hands are laid upon the head; for the head is the noblest and dearest part of the body, in which the intellect is concentrated. When the Greeks would express affection, their expression was "beloved head!" *φίλον κάρα*. And it is this of which the Church would possess herself, and through which she would act upon the body of man's affections and passions. The hands are imposed on it, as the child at baptism is taken into the arms of the minister, to shew that no grace can be obtained except by union with the Church. Fresh aids of the Holy Spirit, and extraordinary gifts, are promised

in this holy rite; for though God's ordinary mercies are not checked by man's negligence, and the blessings of baptism may be hoped for even with ordinary means; yet more than common graces and interpositions can only be obtained by more than common faith, and energy, and prayer, in the Church. And the rite is administered by the bishop, and the bishop only; that as the Christian in Confirmation recognises his allegiance to the Church, he may recognise also its true Monarchical constitution.

Such are some of the truths which seem involved in this ceremony, and which render it a necessary accompaniment to baptism. In this day we have suffered men to neglect it. Whether with this they have neglected the great truths which it embodied and shadowed out—unhappily need not be asked. But if God has been pleased to appoint that man shall be his instrument and agent in conveying his blessings to mankind, and we choose to slight and despise man, and insist on communicating with God, the Sovereign of the universe, without the intervention of his ministers—to hope for blessings from other channels invented by ourselves—to intrude on him without introduction or permission—may it not be, that our very worship may become a profanation, and our prayers be turned into a curse?

CHAPTER XXVI.

AND now there remains one more question.

Where, it may now be asked, is the happiness of the Christian? Where is that pleasure and enjoyment, without which ordinary minds have no conception of happiness, and which they indeed identify with it? And, without this, what promise is held out by God, worthy of the covenant into which we are brought with him?

I answer, then, that of pleasure—mere pleasure—of whatever kind, whether of the senses, or the fancy, or the affections, or the intellect,—the Church, like every other high school of Ethics, knows little. As an end, or motive, she knows nothing of it. I do not say she does not give it, and secure it most amply; but she does not put it forward as an object. Her view of pleasure is the same as that which the best Greek philosophy, and especially Plato, has derived from a profound view of human nature. No high philosophy ever yet confounded, as modern sentimentalists and sensualists have confounded, happiness with pleasure. Pleasure is a feeling; as a feeling it depends necessarily on something else—as heat depends on the application of fire, the sense of sweetness on a certain affection of the nerves. Therefore whatever value might be set upon it, there is something prior to it of more importance, and in which our real good must reside. Aristotle made this an action of the mind—contemplation, *θεωρία*. He would not recognise the gratifications of the senses, because in these

there is no exercise of the noblest part of man's nature, his thought and intellect. There is no perception of relations, no consciousness of ideas, which are the proper subject of the reason and understanding. Human happiness, with Aristotle, was the exercise of the noblest faculties of man on the noblest of subjects; and his noblest faculty was reason, and the noblest subject of the reason was eternal, immutable truth. Christianity says the same. The real external good is truth, and the Author of truth, even God himself; and the happiness of man is faith, or the contemplation of God through the highest of all powers—the power of God's own Spirit; and the contemplation of Him not merely, as Aristotle might have meant, abstractedly and intellectually, in his relation to Himself—but in his relations to man and to ourselves; thus bringing into play our moral affections, as well as our intellect, and uniting practice and contemplation in one. And on such an energy, said Aristotle, would follow necessarily the purest pleasure. For all pleasure depending on some action, the purest pleasure would be essentially interwoven with the highest action. But the action, not the pleasure, is to be the object of our pursuit.[1] Plato slightly differed from him. He made the happiness of man consist in conforming himself to an external standard laid down for him by God;[2] which standard was the nature itself of God. The comprehension of this standard, or, as a Christian would say, the knowledge of God, was with Plato the first of human goods, as God himself was the one and only good, from which all others flowed; then came the human action by which our hearts, and wills, and understanding, were brought into conformity with this law, *μέτρον*;

[1] Ethic. Nichom. lib. x. [2] Philebus.

and then the sense of delight with which this action must be attended. For all pleasure, Plato knew, was produced by the fulfilment of some want, the satisfaction of some desire, the reaching some end, after which we have been straining; and thus without some outward limit, end, or rule, fixed for us as a standard for our action, and without some internal effort to attain to it, and finally without success in the attainment—success attended with some difficulty, and enhanced by delay and doubt—there can be no pleasure. Water pleases not without previous thirst; honours are valueless, except to the ambitious; wealth has no charm to one who has riches; possession is insipid, acquisition only is full of delight. And so also the Church speaks. She acknowledges One only True, Independent Good, God himself; from whom all other goodness flows and radiates. And human good she declares to be faith, the knowledge of God; and, secondly, obedience to Him, as to a law. And upon this she adds, that pleasure will necessarily follow. But it must be received, as Aristotle says, as an appendage, a crown, an additional unexpected gift, ἐπιθήκη, not made the primary thought. She would take the mind of man out of itself, its own emotions, and its own affections. She would fix it on another Being, who is all perfection. She knows that the moment it turns away, and fastens on any other object, the charm is broken, and the connexion dissolved. And to think of our own pleasure instead of God, destroys all pleasure; for the pleasure depends on the contemplation of God.

In the technical language of philosophy, Catholic Christianity is objective. Dissent, and heresy, and all false philosophy, is subjective. Catholic Christianity fixes its law of duty, and its object of affection, and its standard of truth, out of the human

mind. The rest place them within it. And as the human mind is perpetually shifting, all law, and love, and truth, must soon disappear in such a floating quicksand.

When a man is balancing himself on a rope — let us use a familiar illustration — it is necessary to play music to him. To this music he gives up his whole attention. He becomes absorbed in it; and so long as it continues, or his attention remains fixed on it, so long the movements of his muscles run on into each other spontaneously and mechanically, adjusting his centre of gravity without his knowing how, and preserving him in safety. But let the music cease, or let him cease to think of it, and begin to think of himself, and to regulate his muscles by reason, and he drops to the ground.

And so it is with the happiness of man. Let him continue to fix his eye on an object external to himself, on that perfect Being who only can fill his affections, and the pleasure will accompany the contemplation naturally and necessarily. Let him think of the pleasure, and it instantly vanishes. Pleasure and goodness are inseparably connected; but connected like the convex and the concave sides of a line. They cannot be separated, but they are wholly distinct; and if a man will attempt to walk on the concave, instead of the convex side, he will fall and break his neck.

But the Church goes still farther. She not only refuses to make pleasure the promised end and object of her members, but she promises them, instead, positive pain. Over the entrance of her temple she raises a solemn warning — almost a threat — a repeated denunciation, that they who would become the servants of her Lord and Master, and partake of his privileges, and be united to his nature, must take up their cross. And indeed this endurance of

pain is the essential condition of human excellence. To bear cold and heat, hunger and thirst, sickness and want; to stand firm against the yearnings of desire; to despise shame; to stifle appetite; to crush, with a hand of iron, every rebellious movement of the heart,—has been the precept and the boast of all elevated philosophy since philosophy first existed. And why? Because for man to become an object of our admiration, he must have power; and the only proof of real power is the mastery of his own inclinations, and the voluntary submission to pain, when pleasure is within his reach. Because he must be a spontaneous agent, and yet is in all things in the hands of God; and one thing only is left which he can call his own —his suffering. Because he is sinful and frail, and as such cannot be respected; and only one mode remains by which, in the absence of goodness, nature commands our respect — our pity at well-borne pain. Because without pain endeavouring to drag us aside, there would be no deliberate choice, no prudence, no preference of the future to the present, no reason; and without an exercise of reason man's virtue is not perfect. Because to be united with God, we must be like to God; and God has been pleased to set before us, for his inscrutable purposes, his own Son in the likeness of man, voluntarily bearing our sins and sufferings for our redemption upon the cross. Because man's heart is full of life and buoyancy, hasty, rash, and impetuous, and cannot be brought to coolness and temperate sobriety without the chastening of pain. Because he is a sinful being, full of sinful appetites, and with sin pain is necessarily connected; we may not see how, or why, but that it is and should be so connected, both our own conscience warns, and the experience of each day proves. Because, it might seem, that as

the flesh is the mysterious seat of his guilt, so it must also be the seat of his punishment; and as sin is caused by pleasure, so it must be worn out and crucified by pain. Because no when is man more elevated, more spiritualised, more detached from the encumbrance of his body, and approximated to a heavenly nature, than when, with anguish and suffering weighing him down, he can still command his thoughts, rule his affections, determine his actions, without swerving to the right hand or the left. And because, if he cannot bear pain, he cannot resist temptation, and must succumb to vice, which always has pleasure in her hand. Pain, therefore, and the privilege of bearing pain, and grace to bear it well, is the first promise of God, the first constituent of human happiness; and they who will not or cannot accept it at the beginning of their course, must be content to lose that which follows at the end—pleasure. For in the end pleasure does come, infinite, undying, unwearying, unexhausted, unappreciable by the human thought—"which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." But it will come to us of itself, without our seeking. If we seek it, we shall not find it. If we make it our object, it will elude our grasp. It is not our good, but only an appendage to our good, fixed to it as a shadow to a substance. Without the substance, the shadow cannot exist; and when we lose the substance, the shadow vanishes also.

One thing only may be remarked, that it is no strange incoherent appendage. It is not as if a child were promised the pleasure of eating an apple in reward for learning its lesson; or as when the enjoyment of health follows on the practice of temperance. It is essentially, intrinsically wrapt up in the exercise of our virtue, of faith in contemplation, of

obedience in practice. It is part of the same action; and only does not accompany the action from the first, because until after repeated actions we have not yet extinguished the opposite temptation, or brought our thoughts round to the true object. What is man's wisdom, but the knowledge and contemplation of God, as being himself possessed by God? What is the sum of his affections, but love to God, as to the Being to whom he belongs? What is his strength, but this consciousness of being able to do all things in God? What is his holiness and goodness, but the presence of God within him? What is his duty, but to realise this presence and obey its laws? And what is his pleasure, but the same act of realising it, the same process of contemplation; just as the pleasure of an artist consists in contemplating his work; as the delight of a benevolent man is wrapt up in beholding the comfort of the beings whom he has relieved; as the satisfaction of any desire is the attainment of an end, conformity to a standard? And thus, in another life, we need not ask whether the senses will be opened to new enjoyments in heaven — whether the eye, and ear, and taste, and touch, will be made avenues to new luxurious emotions — whether the intellect will be satiated with new discoveries—whether the affections will be expanded to embrace more enjoyable objects. So long as God is before us, infinite in power, wisdom, and goodness, and yet looking down upon us as his frail and imperfect creatures, as beings united with himself—and of this union we are conscious,—so long there must be in the heart a well-spring of joy and delight, which nothing can dry up and nothing embitter. Our whole existence must be luxury; our whole being one thrill of delight. Such, then, are the duties and happiness of a Christian who has acted like a Christian.

But what is the duty and proper frame of mind with which a man who, instead of keeping this covenant of his Baptism, has perpetually broken it, should walk through the remainder of his life? Suffering, we have seen, must have been his lot, even had he remained without actual sin in himself. Whatever might have been the case in Paradise—and even there self-denial was required, and the endurance of abstinence,—on earth, as men now are placed, *they must suffer*. But the suffering of the innocent is one thing, and the suffering of the guilty another. To walk boldly, manfully, and perseveringly, under the cross which God has laid upon us, without shame, or murmur, or fear, with an open front and an uplifted eye, is the privilege of the good Christian, whose vow of baptism is not yet broken. To walk under the same cross, but with a tenfold burden, broken-hearted, humbled, degraded, with only not despair; fearing even where there is no fear; doubting in the midst of light; sorrowing with a perpetual sorrow; and yet still clinging to his Lord, who has not yet abandoned him, so long as he can bear the cross at all—this is the privilege, the sole remaining privilege, and good, and virtue, and happiness of a penitent. And which of us is not a penitent? Which of us can look back to our infancy, and if the white robes which then we wore were brought before us now, as the ancient Church would have brought them forth, would not blush and weep over their defilement? And therefore sorrow is the life of a Christian, as Christians now live. Tears, and penitence, and self-privation, and mortification of pride, and a melancholy which is not misery, must be our daily devotion. Laughter, and merriment, and comfort, can have little place among criminals who have once been pardoned, and have again sinned, and are now all but judged and condemned again.

The language will sound harsh; and many will fear that, if carried out, it would encourage moroseness, despondency, and a morbid asceticism, which would unfit us for the duties of the world, and darken the whole course of our existence, and supersede the promises of the Church, and even convert the Gospel of peace and comfort into a message of fear and anger. But the truth is not to be suppressed, because an uninstructed mind is liable to pervert it. Let us remember who are the characters to whom it is applied. Look round on the world, and trace the effects even of a single crime on the constitution of the mind, as well as on society. Consider how much mischief has been done by the irregular, fanatical movements even of well-intentioned men, whose minds have been shaken and rent by previous sins. Think how much better it were that such men should always carry about with them a humbling, awful sense of past faults, and even of future danger. Recollect that this very sorrow carries with it its own balm, and this very fear is the surest ground of hope. Think if it be possible to magnify the privileges of Baptism, without magnifying the danger of neglecting them; or to rouse men to energy in standing firm, and advancing on their duty, without a corresponding alarm at the possibility of falling. There is to be no despair, and no selfish, indolent, sickly sorrow; but a sorrow which prompts to action, which makes us vigilant, earnest, patient against future failings, which never pronounces on the future—neither joyfully, as if safety were certain, nor miserably, as if it were lost. The confession which every day is put into our mouth at our entrance into the church, is the proper language, alas! of almost every Christian, especially in this day of coldness, carelessness, and self-indulgence. And the more we enter into

its spirit, the more we shall frame ourselves to that temperate, meek, gentle, obedient, and earnest, but saddened, tone of mind, which becomes such beings as we are, and with which even external Nature in this present ruined world seems most to sympathise and accord.

And with this warning I will close the book. Remember you, the young, who have read it, that its end is not knowledge, but practice. Do not think, that to have read any book through will profit you even intellectually, unless you apply its principles, expand its hints, balance its statements, test its assertions by an exercise of your own mind.

To read, is one thing—to study and learn, another. My object has been to supply you with materials for study; to remind you, when exercising your reason on the first of all sciences, of great and holy truths, which other men, calling themselves Christian, have long set aside from their theories of morals and philosophy; to bring you once more under the eye and the hand of the Church when you are studying the nature of man, as well as when you study the revelations of God; and to remind you of the same great truths, which you learn as the first lesson of your childhood in your Catechism and Creed, that there is one God, the Lord and Maker of all things,—and one Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all mankind,—and one Holy Spirit, whom He imparts to his chosen people,—and one Church, in whose bosom that people is born and nourished;—and that unless you obey that Church, to be a member of it is only greater condemnation; and without membership with the Church, you have no share in the Holy Spirit; and without share in the Holy Spirit, no part in Christ; and without part in Christ, no union with God; and without union with Him, no strength, power, goodness, virtue,

righteousness, wisdom, purity, or life or light—all is darkness, past, present, and future. And they who grope about in it, as the unhappy men who reason of justice, and judgment, and truth, without a word of Him who is the source of all,—are but blind guides leading the blind, and both will fall into the pit. May God save us from falling with them!

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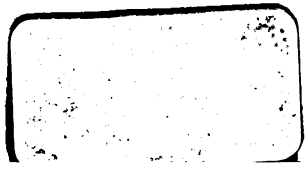
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